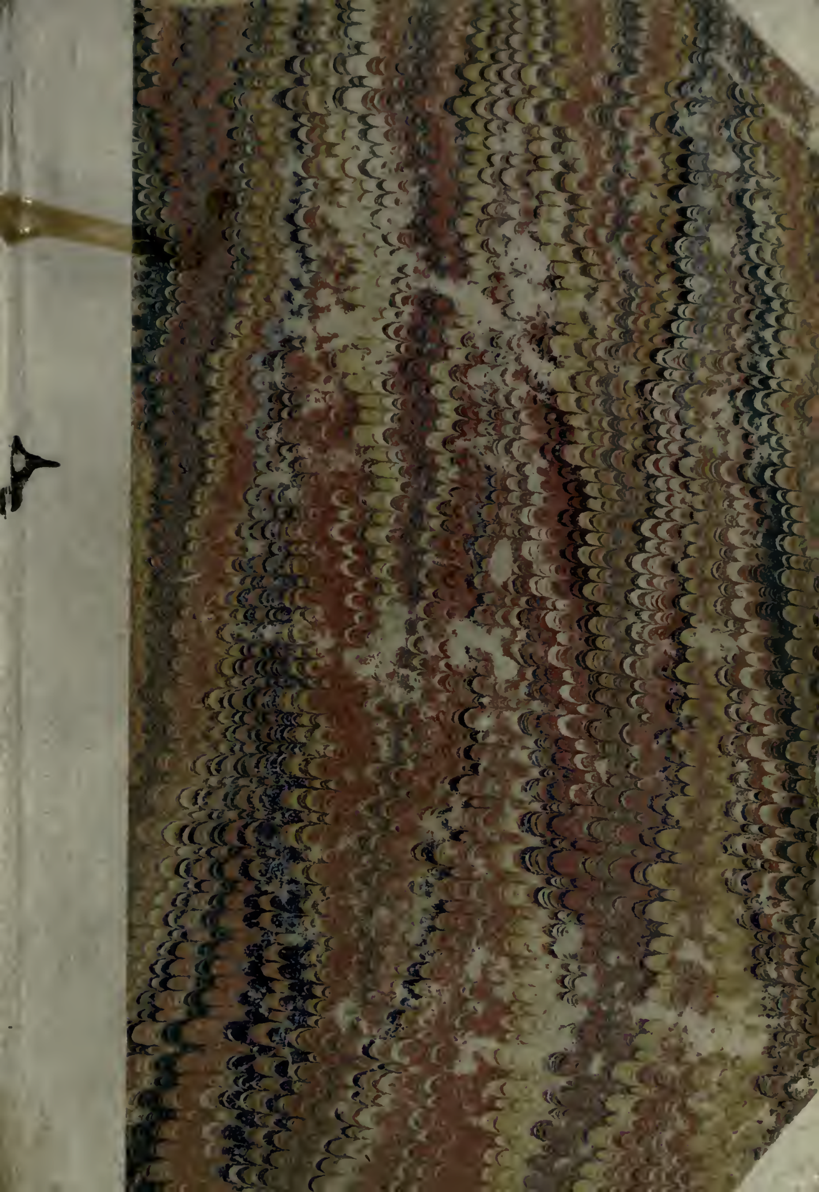
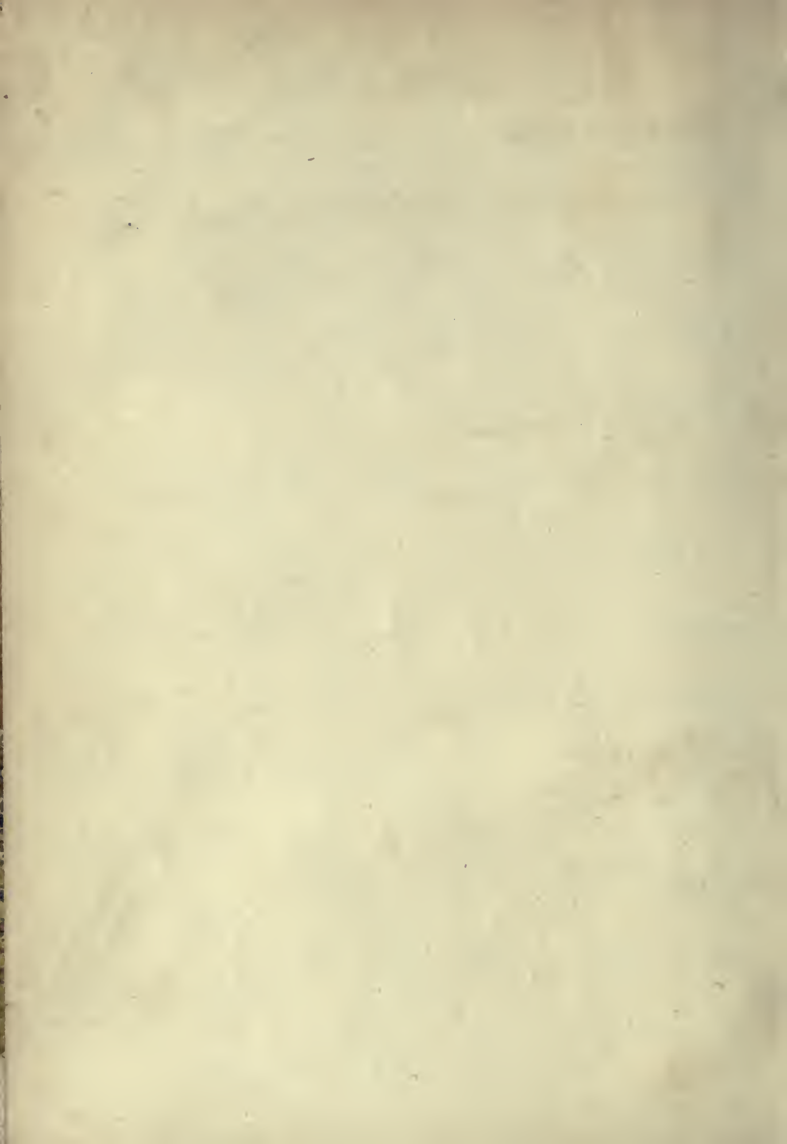


"The Crescent and the Cross" Eliot Warburton the author of this book and the friend of Charles Lever, lost his life at sea in the burning of the "Amazon" when one hundred persons perished by fire.

In a life of Charles Lever, mention is made of the fact, and that Warburton in his celebrated "Darien" has given a terribly realistic description of the destruction of a ship by fire at sea with the loss of many lives.



THE CRESCENT AND THE CROSS;

OR,

ROMANCE AND REALITIES

OF

EASTERN TRAVEL.

BY

ELIOT WARBURTON.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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1852.



DEDICATORY PREFACE

TO THE EIGHTH EDITION.

TO THE REV. ÉDWARD HARTOPP CRADOCK,
CANON OF WORCESTER,
ETC., ETC., ETC.,

A Churchman without bigotry, a scholar without pedantry, I dedicate these sketches of sacred and historic lands. In doing so, I take a final leave of this my first essay in Literature, as of an old friend to whom I have much reason to be grateful. If, in its present more popular form, my work should reach beyond the library and the drawing-room, to the factory and the farm-house, I shall feel more grateful still; for to amuse, if not to enlighten, some holiday hours of the working-man, or to cheer the weary leisure of his sick bed, is one of the privileges I should most value.

The "cheap excursions" that now open new sources of interest and information to the labouring classes are not confined to mere locomotion on the railroad or the river. Excursions of thought, not less useful, may be made by the artisan, without

leaving his own fireside: there seated, in relaxation of physical toil, he may explore Egypt with Belzoni, and Nineveh with Layard, or perform pilgrimage to the Holy Land, as his fathers did in the old times before him. The knowledge and material for thought that were formerly secluded among philosophers and travellers, are now "laid down," as it were, like gas and water, at almost every poor man's door. They may help themselves at discretion, and fortunate it is for them when the stream runs pure, for no legislative measure can improve the sanitary condition of mental nutriment. Hence arises the great importance of providing cheap Literature of a description that may enlighten, while it interests the mind of the self-educating people, without pandering to base passions, or conniving at false prejudices. Science, popularly explained, as in the excellent "Household Words;" biographies of wise and worthy citizens; histories impartially composed; and faithful records of foreign travel, appear to be best calculated for this great object.

If into one of these extensive classes my work may be allowed to claim admission, I desire on its behalf no higher compliment. If few may be made wiser, I trust that none will be made worse by any thought that it contains.

Rutland Gate, Hyde Park,
November 21, 1850.

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OF VOLUME I.

THE CRESCENT AND THE CROSS.

VOL. I.

CHAPTER I.

THE OUTWARD BOUND — LIFE AT SEA.

And oh! when the glad waves foam around,
And the wind blows fair and free,
The health that we drank to the Outward-bound
Will come back to their memory.

Old friends will still seem near them,
In their ocean-cradled sleep;
And that dreaming-thought will cheer them,
Far away on the lonely deep.

Then fill, while the mid-watch passes,
Fill, the toast let it circle round,
From full hearts and brimming glasses,
And, hurrah! for the Outward-bound!

HON. MRS. NORTON.

WE took leave of Old England and the Old Year together. New Year's daylight found us standing on Southampton Pier, while the town itself lay buried beneath an avalanche of snowy mist, through which a few spires scarcely struggled into sight. The Oriental steam-ship lay about a gun-shot from the shore, sucking in a mingled mass of

passengers and luggage through a cavernous mouth in her cliff-like side; boatload after boatload was swallowed like mere spoonfuls, until it seemed marvellous how even her aldermanic bulk could "find stomach for them all." I had the Polyphemian boon of being devoured last, and was thus a mere observer of the partings and departings of the "Outward bound."

On mounting the ship's side, I found the lower deck one vast pile of luggage, vainly endeavouring to be identified by its distracted owners. No one seemed to find anything they wanted; cyclopean portmanteaus, "to be opened at Calcutta," presented themselves freely; saddlery and bullock-trunks were quite obtrusive; but little "indispensables for the voyage" were nowhere to be found — night garments were invisible, and remedies for sea-sickness reserved themselves for the overland journey. Search and suspense, however, were soon terminated by the sinking of the whole chaotic mass into the yawning depths of the hold, and the tomb-like hatches closed over our "loved and lost." After this bereavement, we all assembled on the upper-deck, in involuntary and unconscious muster, each inspecting and inspected by his fellow-travellers.

With the exception of two or three families, every one seemed to be a stranger to every one,

and each walked the deck in a solitude of his own. There were old men, with complexions as yellow as the gold for which they had sold their youth, returning to India in search of the health which their native country, longed for through a life, denied them. There were young cadets, all eagerness and hope, though these, their predecessors, stood before them, mementos, — like the mummies at Egyptian banquets, — of the end of their young life's festival. There were missionary clergymen with Ruth-like wives; merchants, with invoices apparently as fondly prized; young widows, with eyes black as their mourning, and sparkling as their useless marriage-ring; and one or two fair girls — Heaven knows what sorrow sent them there! — straying from their English homes of peace and purity, over the ocean and the desert, to encounter the worst dangers of Indian society. Then there were little cadets, in whom the pride of new-born independence and uniform contended with fond and melancholy thoughts of home: there were sailors, with the blunt manly bearing, and free open speech of their profession; and, lastly, there were two or three vague wanderers, like myself, who were only leaving Europe, as men leave a crowded room, to breathe awhile freely in the open East.

All these, in various groups, were scattered over the spacious upper deck, on which there was

no stain, nor any interruption to the lady's walk or the sailor's rush; it was smooth, flush, and level, except for the graceful and almost imperceptible swell and rise towards the bows.

Below, the busy, bustling scene was very different. Miss Mitford herself might recognise the lower deck as a complete village. It was a street of cabins, over whose doors you read the addresses of the doctor, the baker, the butcher, the confectioner, the carpenter, and many others; besides the "quality at the west end," in the shape of officers' quarters. This street terminated in a rural scene, where the smell of new-mown hay, the lowing of cattle, the bleating of sheep, and the crowing of cocks, produced quite a pastoral effect. Among these signs of peace and plenty, four carronades frowned rather gloomily; and beneath the farm-yard throbbed the iron heart of the gigantic engine.

About noon, the last boat shoved off, the gangway curled itself up, a voice from the paddle-boxes said quietly — "Go on!" — and the vast vessel glided away as smoothly as a gondola.

The first day of our voyage passed very silently away: many of my comrades were sea-sick, and more were sick at heart; but in the evening there was a startling eruption of writing-desks, and a perfect flutter of pens preparing for the Falmouth post-bag. I think I see those eager scribes before

me now: men of business, with their swift and steady quill; women, gracefully bending over their twice-crossed notes (not the more legible, lady! for that tear —); and lonely little boys, biting their bran-new pen-holders, and looking up to the ceiling in search of pleasant things to say to some bereaved mother. Her only comfort, perhaps, was to be that little scrawl, till her self-sacrificing heart was at rest for ever, or success had gilded her child's far-distant career.

The following day we were at Falmouth, and then we were at sea.

By the bright goddess who sprang from ocean's foam, there is something glorious in this, her native element! Every heart dilates, and every pulse beats high, as, with favouring breezes in a cloud of sail, we sweep along our "mountain-path" over the Bay of Biscay. Philosophers tell us that we are composed of these same elements of air and ocean: and surely there is strong sympathy between us; for every wave we bound over, every breeze we breathe, is full of life and health, and energy and hope. There is no such remedy for drooping frame or pining spirit as the sea — I read it in every voice, and every eye, so changed within the last few days: colour is come back to the pale

cheek, courage to the sinking heart, and health of mind and body to every voyager on board.

The joyous and light-hearted yet gallant bearing of the sailor is no accident; it issues naturally from his stirring and eventful career, from the exhilarating air that he breathes, the freedom from petty cares that he enjoys, and from the almost unconscious pride of a chivalrous profession, which there are no town-bred coxcombs to laugh down. His life is passed in perpetual activity upon the ocean — that one great battle-field of England! Her flag has swept its plains in triumph from the death-hour of the Armada, "when the winds and waves had commission from God to fight under British banners;" until these latter days, when the fortresses of Syria crumbled into ruins beneath her thunder, and a nation containing one third of earth's inhabitants bowed down before her.*

But some practical details of a sea-life may interest such of my readers as have not already attained to an experience so customary in these amphibious days. Our time flows on smoothly, pleasantly, and even rapidly — its course is so monotonous and even. The minds of sea-going men

* The walls of Acre, impregnable even to Napoleon, lay heaped in ruins; Beyrout, Tyre, Sidon, Tortosa-Gibell, and Scanderoon, were made defenceless; the "Flowery Land" was laid open to the world: England had but to say to her navy "do this!" and the first despatch announced that it was done!

enjoy exemption from the daily cares that fever ordinary life ashore; there is no wealth to be lost or gained, no visitors, no letters to disturb into joy or sorrow, no imperative business to press on the attention: you live in the open air, between the awful ocean and the glorious sky: there is very little loud laughter, but there is scarcely an anxious or a gloomy brow. Every one finds a listener, and still more easily does every one find communicativeness. Information on every subject that can interest the traveller only waits an audience. You will hear places, that sound most strange and distant, spoken of with the familiarity of citizens: if you inquire about any locality in the wide East, up starts a native of the spot; and a gazetteer of voices is ready to enlighten you on any subject of geography, from Cairo to Hong-Kong.

There are nearly two hundred souls on board, yet there is as much order and regularity as in an English family. At half-past eight in the morning a dressing-bell resounds through the decks and galleries; the sleepers tumble off the shelves that are called berths, and a hundred razors are gleaming in a hundred miniature looking-glasses. At nine o'clock all are quietly seated round a well-furnished breakfast-table, whereat milk fresh from the dairy on the deck, hot rolls, salt fish, and turtle-cutlets figure advantageously. About ten the sunny deck

is alive with inhabitants, not unsuccessfully imitating life ashore. Merry groups of children are playing about as if on a grass-plot. Twos and threes of men are walking the decks for exercise as eagerly as if they 'd never reach the bowsprit in time; a tranquil group of smokers is arched over each paddlebox; ladies are reading, or working worsted monsters under the awning. An invalid or two is laid upon a sofa, gossiping now and then gently to a caught child, or a pausing passer-by. The sea is sparkling brightly as we move swiftly but smoothly over it; and, except the silent sailor at the restless wheel, there is scarcely anything to remind us that

> "Our path is on the mountain wave,
> Our home is on the deep."

It did not require the isolation of our lot to create a deep interest about one of our fair invalids, who only appeared on deck when we entered on a milder climate. This poor girl was going to the Mediterranean, in the hope of prolonging, not of saving, the life whose sunset hour was already visible in the bright colour of her hectic cheek. When I first saw her, her eyes, in which the light of immortality seemed already shining, were gazing mournfully on those northern skies she was never to behold again — at least, with an *upward* glance. Her helplessness, and youth, and beauty, seemed

to exercise an influence over all around her; the little children spoke softly, and the helmsman seemed to move the wheel more gently, lest it should disturb her.

Is it the respect that men unconsciously feel towards those about to "put on immortality," or tenderness for those about to part from earth, that checks the wild laugh, and makes the eager foot tread lightly in the presence of that pale girl? I know not; but if the old theory that failing life could be restored by the infusion of healthy blood were true — I believe there is not a man in all that crowded ship who would not freely let his best blood flow for her whom he never saw before, and whom, after a few more sunsets, none will ever see again.

"Steward!" calls out a little cadet, with the tone of a great mogul, "are you bringing me that ale?"

"No, Sir," replies a voice from below; "twelve dozen has been drunk since breakfast, and the purser won't allow any more till luncheon."

This reasonable restriction is soon removed; luncheon appears at twelve, and with it the desired beer. Four o'clock is struck in concert with the dinner-bell: no one is late, and no injustice is done on this occasion. At five the deck is again alive; and, if the sea be smooth, quadrillers and country-

dancers bound over the depths of ocean, as much at home there as tritons or sea-nymphs: as the number of the former preponderates considerably, the latter are in great request. If the evening be stormy, the men gather round the oven between decks, and smoke, and sing, or listen with patient looks to the more vehement conversationists — the bell-wethers of the talking flock. Seven o'clock bells summon to a tea of a very substantial nature, which is followed by whist, chat, worstedwork, backgammon, — and books for quiet people — like us. At ten there is a light supper; at eleven all lights are extinguished, except those at the binnacle and the mast-head; you tumble into your berth, and the day is done.*

* I have dwelt thus long on the details of a modern sea-life, because a prejudice at first existed against the long voyage; this I think is without foundation now, and requires only experience to overcome. There is no doubt that, for the infirm, the aged, and the very young, it is the most expedient means of reaching Malta and the shores of the Levant; and for all, the most healthful and convenient.

I have spoken of the "Oriental" steamer as I found her in two passages of upwards of 5000 miles in length; and before I leave this subject, I must bear my willing testimony to the ability and courtesy of her captain, officers, and well-ordered crew: they all do credit to their gallant ship, as she does to the country that produced her.

CHAPTER II.

GIBRALTAR — THE STRAITS — ALGIERS — MALTA.

England, we love thee better than we know —
And this I learnt when, after wanderings long
'Mid people of another stock and tongue,
I heard, at length, thy martial music blow,
And saw thy warrior children to and fro
Pace, keeping ward at one of those huge gates
Which, like twin giants, guard th' Herculean Straits.

R. C. TRENCH.

On the morning of the third day after leaving England, we entered the much calumniated Bay of Biscay, whose dangers are merely traditional, since the introduction of steam. On the 5th, we caught a glimpse of Cape Finisterre, and then passed from the Bay of Biscay into waveless waters, sheltered by the Spanish shore. Thenceforth, every morning rose with brighter suns and balmier breezes, until we came in sight of Capes St. Vincent and Trafalgar, relieved off the distant but beautiful mountain coast of Barbary. The proud thoughts awakened by these scenes of England's victories were not interrupted by the next bold headland; for there was Gibraltar, and there England's glorious flag was flying.

There was not a cloud in all the calm and

glowing sky; the crescent moon, the emblem of Moslem power, was trembling over the picturesque land of the Moor, almost dissolved in a flood of sunshine; the sea, a filagree of blue and silver, faintly reflected the mountains of Medina and Sidonia, among whose snowy summits we seemed to steer: all nature lay wrapt in a pleasant trance; and Spain, especially, was deep in her siesta, as we dashed into the bay of Gibraltar.

The surrounding scenery, even divested of all association, is full of interest. An amphitheatre of finely undulated hills, with Algesiras in their bosom, sweeps along the left. In front, upon a slight eminence, the village of San Rocque grins like a set of white teeth, precipices for its jaw, and the celebrated cork wood for its moustaches; beyond is a range of dark green hills, backed by the mountains of Granada — the Sierra Nevada, whose snowy peaks are tinged with a faint purple. Further to the right there is a low, sandy tract, the Neutral ground; and then — suddenly starting up to the height of fifteen hundred feet — stands the rock of Gibraltar, bound round with fort and battery, and bristling with innumerable guns. Its base is strewn with white houses, perched like sea-gulls wherever they can find a resting-place; and here and there little patches of dark-green announce a garden. Curtain, ravelin, and rampart, blend and mingle

with nature's fortifications; and zig-zag lines from shore to summit look like conductors for the defenders' electric fire to flash along. It is a military maxim now, that no fortifications are in truth impregnable; and it is not in the strength of wall or cliff without, but in the "Spartan's rampart" of brave hearts within, that we trust the British flag to float securely here as on the Tower of London.

Here the invading Moors first established themselves in Spain —

> "When Cava's traitor sire had called the band
> That dyed her mountain streams with Gothic gore,"

and Gib-el Tarik * became Gibraltar. A boatful of us were soon ashore, and scattered over "the Rock," to shop, or cliff, or bastion, as their tastes prompted. I gallopped off on a spirited little barb to the signal-station, the Galleries, the Alameda, and the Moorish castle. Every spot was full of interest — from the craggy summit, with its magnificent view over Spain and Africa, to the mingled masses of house and rock and verandahs, almost meeting over the precipitous streets.

The population was very varied and picturesque: the Moors' "dusk faces, with white turban wreathed;" the Contrabandistas, with embroidered jacket and tinkling bridles, setting out for the hills; the Jew, with his gabardine, and that stern medallic coun-

* The Hill of Tarik, the name of the Saracen leader.

tenance in which the history of his race seems written; the merchant, with his sombrero; the Turk, with his tarboosh; the English sailor and the plumed Highlander.

But the sudden change of climate and vegetation strikes one more, perhaps, than any other. A few days ago, wrapped in great coats, I was shivering among leafless trees: to-day, a light sailor's jacket feels oppressive, and the cactus, aloe, and geranium, are flowering in profusion wherever they can find footing on the steep and rugged rock.

We sailed as the evening gun was firing. The coast of Barbary looked beautiful in the fading light, that harmonized well with that land of old romance and mystery. Even in these later days it is almost as virgin to speculation and enterprise as when the Gothic kings meditated its invasion.

The Strait, through which the Atlantic pours into the Mediterranean at the rate of four or five miles an hour, is here about twelve miles wide. One would suppose that such a vast volume of water might create a very respectable ocean of its own in the course of a year or so: yet with this, assisted by all the rivers that pour in from the coasts of Africa, Asia, and Europe — to say nothing of the Black Sea, which flows in through the Bosphorus at about four miles an hour — the Mediterranean is not able to get up as much as an every-day tide.

Rapidly we swept along its glittering waters, close by the coast of Africa, by Ceuta, Tangiers, and Tetuan, and then bore away for Cape de Gatta, visible by a brilliant moon that appropriately lighted up the coast of Granada.

It is now three hundred and sixty years since the Moors were expelled from this fair land, through which they so long enlightened Europe with the wisdom of the East and the chivalry of the Desert. Under their rule, its gardens smiled, its valleys waved with corn, its very rocks were wreathed with vines, and the Alhambra rose. But then arose a bigotry and fanaticism far fiercer than their own; it could not brook the happiness of a heretic people; the banners of Ferdinand were unfurled, and

> "Red gleamed the CROSS while waned the CRESCENT pale,
> And Afric's echoes thrilled with Moorish matrons' wail."

The Moslemin were banished; poverty and desolation came in their place; and even now, the Christian traveller only ventures among the misery-made robbers of Granada, in search of the remnants of Moorish civilization.

It seems a natural transition from the land of the Abencerrages, to that of Abd el Kader, for which we were now steering. Europe sank with the sun below the horizon on our left; and on the day following but one, Africa rose with morning on our right.

The first view of the coast of Algiers is very picturesque and peculiar in shape and colouring. Steep purple hills, rising abruptly from the sea and broken with dark ravines, are here brightened with little emerald lawns, and there gloomed over by the dark foliage of the palm and fig-tree. Villas, white as marble, speck the wooded parks along the shore; the snowy summits of Mount Atlas are cut clearly out against the bright blue sky above, and a line of sparkling foam runs along the borders of the bright blue sea below.

The city of Algiers, to the right as you enter, looks eastward over its beautiful bay; it is almost of a pyramidal form, very concentrated; its flat and regular roofs look like a succession of white marble terraces, with here and there a swelling mosque dome, or a tapering minaret. This was the seat of Oriental luxury and art; but when the greater robber drove out the lesser, its pleasant places were all defiled; the fountains were choked up, the porcelain floors broken, the palm-trees cut down, and the gardens trampled into wildernesses. Richly did the land deserve a scourge, and never yet were found fitter ministers of wrath than those who visited it.

We showed our colours in passing (a compliment which the fort did not condescend to return), and then stood out to sea against a heavy gale of wind.

We must hurry past Tunis and desolate Carthage,

but "not in silence pass Calypso's Isle." The appearance of this little paradise is far more suitable to its former than its present destination. It contains all the beauties of a continent in miniature: little mountains with craggy summits, little valleys with cascades and rivers, lawny meadows and dark woods, trim gardens and tangled vineyards, silvery sands and craggy shores — all within a circuit of five or six miles. In *our* eyes it was still the enchanted island, and in *our* ears the faint sounds that came to us over the sunny sea were of shepherd's lute or woman's song; but a fat gentleman in green spectacles called it Pantellaria, and informed us that it was the Botany Bay of Naples.

One or two uninhabited little islands, that seem to have strayed from the continent and lost their way, speck the sea between this pleasant penal settlement and Gozo, which is also a claimant for the doubtful honour of Calypso's Isle. Narrow straits separate it from the adjoining rock, which represents the island of Malta.

After a couple of hours' coasting, we entered a watery ravine of battery-crowned cliffs, and came to an anchor in the Grand Harbour.

La Valetta is a sort of hybrid between a Spanish and an Eastern town; most of its streets are flights of steps, to which the verandahs of the houses are like gigantic banisters. Its terraced roofs restore to

the cooped-up citizens nearly all the space lost by building upon; and there are probably not less than five hundred acres of promenadable roof in, or rather on, the city. The church of San Giovanni is very gorgeous, with its vaulted roof of gilded arabesque, its crimson tapestries, finely carved pulpits, and its floor resembling one vast escutcheon; being a mosaic of knightly tombs, on which the coats of arms are finely copied in coloured marble and precious stones. The chapel of the Madonna, in the Eastern aisle, is guarded by massive silver rails, saved from French rapacity by the cunning of a priest, who painted them wood-colour. Notwithstanding all the wealth and splendour of this cathedral, its proudest and most chivalric ornament is a bunch of old rusty irons, suspended on the crimson tapestry. These are the keys of Rhodes; and these the Order, overcome, but unconquered, carried away with them from their ancient seat, the bulwark of Christendom.

The Hotels of the different nations (or Tongues, as they were called), are palaces that bear testimony to the taste and power of their former proprietors. The principal are the Auberges de Castile, and Provence; and the palace of the Grand Master, now that of the British governor. The others are converted into barracks; and probably the costumes of their olden time did not differ more from one another

than those of its present military occupants — the dark green of the rifleman, the scarlet uniform of the 88th, and the varied garb of the Highlander "all plaided and plumed in his tartan array." Every costume of Europe, Asia, and Africa, is to be met with in the streets, which swarm with the most motley and picturesque population. The brilliant sunshine gives an almost prismatic effect to every object; from the gorgeously clad Turk to the beautiful parrot-fish, streaked with every colour in the rainbow; from the fruit and vegetables ranged on tables along the pavé, to the roguish-looking children that persecute you with flowers.

The population in both town and country abounds in a proportion eight times as great as that of England.* Being very frugal and industrious, they are just able to keep themselves alive at present; but what is to become of them a few years hence it is difficult to guess. The celibacy enjoined to the

* Malta is about sixty miles in circumference, containing 130,000 inhabitants. It is composed principally of magnesian limestone, and, being cultivated with great labour, produces oranges, cotton, indigo, saffron, sugar, and large quantities of melons, grapes, and other fruits of the soil of Sicily, which has been carried hither. Corn is grown in sufficient quantities to supply the island for six months: the rest is imported. Game is supplied by the little adjacent island of Comino. The population has nearly doubled since the island came into British occupancy. The revenue derived from the island is about £ 100,000, and the expenditure there about £ 88,000, exclusive, of course, of what the garrison and shipping expend. The Emperor Charles V. presented the island to the Knights Hospitallers, when they were dispossessed of Rhodes.

knights produced its usual licentious results; and the Order bequeathed its morals to the present inhabitants — a legacy which does not tend to diminish their numbers.

Many of the women are very beautiful, combining the gazelle eye of the East with the rich tresses of the North, and the statuesque profile of Greece and Italy. Their peculiar head-dress, the *onnella*, contributes not a little to the effect of their beauty. This is a black silk scarf, worn over the head like a veil,, but gathered in on one side, so as not to eclipse the starry eyes which it seems always endeavouring to cloud over. The old aristocracy, proud and poor, form a society among themselves, to which the English are seldom admitted. Nothing can be more melancholy-looking than their high-walled enclosures scattered over the island; in these, nevertheless, they maintain their exclusiveness and *morgue* in not undignified poverty.

Leaving La Valetta for Citta Vecchia, we passed over and through fortifications of extraordinary strength, consisting principally of vast excavations made in the solid rock. The pretty gardens of Florian partly shelter the open space between these and the outer line of fortifications.

Thence we passed through what would be the dreariest country I ever beheld but for the brilliant sunshine always smiling over it. Scarcely a particle

of vegetation shaded the brown, burning rock. Almost all the soil upon the island has been brought from Sicily, and is retained in little trays or shelves of terraces, built up with dull gray stones. We rode by the side of a well-built aqueduct, by which Valetta derives its supply of fresh water, except whatever may be caught and contained in tanks within the walls. In the suburbs of Citta Vecchia, we entered a church, where about a score of priests were chanting mass. At a beckon from our Maltese guide, one of them instantly abandoned his occupation, doffed his surplice, and accompanied us to the Catacombs: these are of considerable extent, and probably of Phœnician origin.

We groped our way with torches through long narrow passages, from which, on each side, opened crypts, hollowed out for the reception of the corpses. Some were made double, as if for the convenience of those who, even in death, would not be divided; some were cut into little cradles for dead children. Here and there were larger chambers with altars, and blood channels for sacrifice, or perhaps for washing the corpse. These corpses must have been embalmed, by-the-bye, or it would have been impossible for the living to enter this stifling labyrinth with their dead.

These Catacombs scarcely repay the trouble and disagreeabil'ty of their examination, particularly to

those who have seen the Catacombs of Rome and Syracuse. The deserted city of Citta Vecchia is much more interesting, and is, indeed, as far as I know, unique.

You pass along unguarded fortifications of great strength, and enter, by a broken drawbridge, into a stately but profoundly silent city. The houses are handsome, and in good repair; they seem to want only inhabitants to be homes once more. The palaces are magnificent, and appear the more imposing from the deep silence that invests their mysterious-looking walls. Grass and rank weeds are growing in the streets that echo to your horse's tread; and the wind sighs among the lonely pillars and porticoes, with that wailing sound so peculiar to deserted places.

This was anciently the capital of the island; removed first to Vittoria, and finally to its present position by La Valetta, from whom it derives its name.

A little beyond Citta Vecchia is St. Paul's Bay, which, notwithstanding the arguments (ill-founded as it seems to me) of modern authors against Malta being the Melita of the apostle, retains the traditionary honour of which no pen and ink can now deprive it. On conversing with some of the natives as I rode shipwards, I found that they, like other people, had their good old times ("all times when old are good"), and these they consider to have

been when the Order possessed their island. Being a mere populace, they would of course willingly exchange their present for their ancient, or for any other government. They are fain to forget their degraded condition under the knights, who prevented any native from entering their Order (or even the city, without permission); — who, being disdainful as incapable of a lawful connexion, took their daughters to be concubines, and exercised arbitrary power as scornfully as oppressively. If there is less foreign money* spent among the Maltese now, their taxation is far lighter. They have all the advantages of English laws as well as of their own; they sit on juries; are capable of serving in any department, and have a native regiment paid by the British government. Important as this island now is to us, it was perhaps fortunate for England that a less scrupulous nation took that advantage of the degeneracy of the Order and the imbecility of Hompesch which our ideas of justice might have forbidden.**

* The revenues of the Order, in its palmiest days, amounted to £ 3,000,000 sterling.

** "The surrender of Malta had been preconcerted with the French Knights of the Order before Buonaparte sailed from Toulon. When he stood upon its ramparts, Caffarelli observed to him, 'General, it was very lucky that there were people in the town to open the gates for us.' " . . . . . "When we saw a small boat carry at her stern the Standard of the Order, sailing humbly beneath the ramparts on which it had once defied all the forces of the East, I thought I heard the ghosts of Lisle Adam and La Valette venting dismal lamentations; and fancied that I saw Time make to Philosophy the illustrious sacrifice of the most venerable of all illusions." — *Denon.*

CHAPTER III.

ALEXANDRIA.

Why dost thou build the hall, son of the winged days? Thou lookest from thy towers to-day: yet a few years, and the blast of the desert comes, it howls in thy empty courts. — OSSIAN.

Towards evening, on the 18th day since leaving England, the low land of Egypt was visible from the mast-head. A heavy gale had been blowing ever since our departure from Malta, and, though a brilliant sun was shining, foam-clouds swept the decks, converted into rainbows as they past. Not a sail appeared upon these lonely seas, that once swarmed with navies of war and commerce — the only object visible from the deck was a faint speck upon the horizon, but that speck was Pompey's Pillar.

In the time of the Pharaohs, the Egyptians displayed as much jealousy of the Phœnicians and other Mediterranean navigators as the Celestial Empire has done in modern times with regard to "barbarians." Naucratis, at the Canopic mouth, was the Canton of Egypt in those days. Little business, however, seems to have been transacted there; the trade of the valley of the Nile looked only eastward; and Joseph received port-dues from Kosseir nearly 4000 years ago.

Alexander found a colony of Greeks settled at Racotis; his keen perception at once discovered what we have only just found out, that this was in truth the seaport of all India. Dinocrates was commissioned to create a city, which the Macedonian invested with his name, and thus started into existence the haven of our search.

It has been truly said that the ancient city "has bequeathed nothing but its ruins and its name" to the modern Alexandria. Though earth and sea remain unchanged, imagination can scarcely find a place for the ancient walls, fifteen miles in circumference; the vast streets, through the vista of whose marble porticoes the galleys on Lake Mareotis exchanged signals with those upon the sea; the magnificent temple of Serapis on its platform of one hundred steps; the four thousand palaces, and the homes of six hundred thousand inhabitants.

All that is now visible within the shrunken and mouldering walls is a piebald town — one-half European, with its regular houses, tall, and white, and stiff; the other half, Oriental, with its mud-coloured buildings and terraced roofs, varied with fat mosques and lean minarets. The suburbs are encrusted with the wretched hovels of the Arab poor; and immense mounds and tracts of rubbish occupy the wide space between the city and its walls: all beyond is a dreary waste. Yet this is the site Alexander selected

from his wide dominions, and which Napoleon pronounced to be unrivalled in importance. Here luxury and literature, the Epicurean and the Christian, philosophy and commerce, once dwelt together. Here stood the great library of antiquity, "the assembled souls of all that men held wise." Here the Hebrew Scriptures expanded into Greek under the hands of the Septuagint. Here Cleopatra, "vainqueur des vainqueurs du monde," revelled with her Roman conquerors. Here St. Mark preached the truth upon which Origen attempted to refine, and here Athanasius held warlike controversy. Here Amru conquered, and here Abercrombie fell. Looking now along the shore, beneath me lies the harbour in the form of a crescent — the right horn occupied by the palace of the Pasha, his hareem, and a battery; the left, a long, low sweep of land, alive with windmills; in the centre is the city: to the westward, the flat, sandy shore stretches monotonously away to the horizon; to the eastward, the coast merges into Aboukir Bay.

Having taken this general view of our first Egyptian city, let us enter it in a regular manner to view it in detail. The bay is crowded with merchant vessels of every nation, among which tower some very imposing-looking three-deckers, gigantic, but dismantled; the red flag with the star and crescent flying from the peak. Men-of-war barges

shoot past you with crews dressed in what look like red nightcaps and white petticoats. They rise to their feet at every stroke of the oar, and pull all out of time. Here, an "ocean patriarch" (as the Arabs call Noah), with white turban and flowing beard, is steering a very little ark filled with unclean-looking animals of every description; and there, a crew of swarthy Egyptians, naked from the waist upward, are pulling some pale-faced strangers to a vessel with loosened top-sails, and blue-peter flying.

At length, amid a deafening din of voices, and a pestilential effluvia from dead fish and living Arabs, you fight your way ashore; and if you had just awakened from a sleep of ages, you could scarcely open your eyes upon a scene more different from those you have lately left. The crumbling quays are piled with bales of eastern merchandize, islanded in a sea of white turbans wreathed over dark, melancholy faces. Vivid eyes glitter strangely upon solemn-looking and bearded countenances. High above the variegated crowd peer the long necks of hopeless-looking camels. Wriggling and struggling amidst all this mass were picturesquely ragged little boys, dragging after them shaven donkeys with carpet saddles, upon one of which you suddenly find yourself seated with scarcely a volition of your own; and are soon galloping along filthy lanes, with blank, white, windowless and doorless walls on

either side, and begin to wonder when you are to arrive at the Arab city. You have already passed through it, and are emerging into the Frank quarter, a handsome square of tall white houses, over which the flags of every nation in Europe denote the residences of the various consuls. In this square is an endless variety of races and costumes, most picturesquely grouped together, and lighted brilliantly by a glowing sun in a cloudless sky. In one place, a drove of camels are kneeling down, with jet black slaves in white turbans, or crimson caps, arranging their burdens; in another, a procession of women waddles along, wrapped in large shroud-like veils from head to foot, with a long black bag, like an elephant's trunk, suspended from their noses, and permitting only their kohl-stained eyes to appear. In another, a group of Turks in long flowing drapery are seated in a circle smoking their chibouques in silence, and enjoying society after the fashion of other gregarious animals; grooms in petticoat trousers are leading horses with crimson velvet saddles richly embroidered; a detachment of sad-looking soldiers in white cotton uniform is marching by to very wild music; and here and there a Frank with long moustaches is lounging about, contemplating these unconscious tableaux as if they had been got up simply for his amusement.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NILE — ITS BATTLE.

The Nile! the Nile! I hear its gathering roar,
No vision now, no dream of ancient years —
Throned on the rocks, amid the watery war,
The King of Floods, old Homers' Nile, appears,
With gentle smile, majestically sweet,
Curbing the billowy steeds that vex them at his feet.

LORD LINDSAY.

The spirit of our fathers
Shall start from every wave;
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And ocean was their grave.

CAMPBELL.

"Egypt is the gift of the Nile," said one* who was bewildered by its antiquity before our History was born (at least, he is called the father of it). A bountiful gift it was, that the "strange, mysterious, solitary stream" bore down in its bosom from the luxuriant tropics to the desert. For many an hour have I stood upon the city-crowning citadel of Cairo, and gazed unweariedly on the scene of matchless beauty and wonder that lay stretched beneath my view: cities and ruins of cities, palm-forests and green savannahs, gardens, and palaces, and groves of olive. On one side, the boundless

* Herodotus.

desert, with its pyramids; on the other, the land of Goshen, with its luxuriant plains, stretching far away to the horizon.

Yet this is an exotic land! That river, winding like a serpent through its paradise, has brought it from far regions, unknown to man. That strange and richly-varied panorama has had a long voyage of it! Those quiet plains have tumbled down the cataracts; those demure gardens have flirted with the Isle of Flowers,* five hundred miles away; those very pyramids have floated down the waves of Nile. To speak chemically, that river is a solution of Ethiopia's richest regions, and that vast country is merely a precipitate. At Pæstum** one sees the remnant of a city elaborated from mountain streams; the Temple of Neptune came down from the Calabrian Hills, by water; and the Forum, like Demosthenes, prepared itself for its tumult-scorning destiny among the dash of torrents, and the crash of rocks: but here we have a whole kingdom, risen, like Aphrodité, from the wave.

The sources of this wonderful river are still veiled in mystery — it is the very heroine of geographical romance, often and warmly wooed, but never won. War has tried to ravish her by force,

* Elephantina.

** For an account of the formation of the travertine of which Pæstum was built, see Sir Humphrey Davy's "Last Days of a Philosopher."

and Commerce to bribe her by its gold; but the Naïad of the Nile is virgin still. The remotest inhabitants seem to know as little of its origin, yet more remote: I have conversed with slave-dealers familiar with Abyssinia as far as the Galla country, and still their information was bounded by that vague word — *South:* still from the South gushed the great river.

This much is certain that, from the junction of the Taccaze or Astraboras, the Nile runs a course of upwards of twelve hundred miles to the sea, without one tributary stream.* During this career, it is exposed to the evaporation of a burning sun, drawn off into a thousand canals, absorbed by porous banks and thirsty sands, drunk of by every living thing, from the crocodile to the pasha, from the papyrus to the palm-tree: and yet, strange to say, it seems to pour into the sea a wider stream than it displays between the cataracts a thousand miles away.

The Nile is all in all to the Egyptian: if it withheld its waters for a week, his country would become a desert; it waters and manures his fields, it supplies his harvests, and then carries off their produce to the sea for exportation: he drinks of it, he fishes in it, he travels on it: it *is* his slave, and used

* "Exemple unique dans l'histoire hydrographipue du monde," — HUMBOLDT.

to be his god. Egyptian mythology recognised in it the Creative Principle, and poetically engaged it in eternal war with the desert, under the name of Typhon, or the Destructive Principle. Divine honours were paid to this aqueous deity; and it is whispered among mythologists that the heart's-blood of a virgin was yearly added to its stream; — not unlikely, in a country where they worshipped crocodiles, and were anxious to consult their tastes.

The Arab looks upon all men as aliens who were not fortunate enough to be born beside the Nile; and the traveller is soon talked into a belief that it affords the most delicious water in the world. Shiploads of it are annually sent to Constantinople for the Sultan's hareem, where it is in great request, not only on epicurean, but anti-Malthusian grounds. The natives dignify their beloved river with the title of "El Bahr," *the sea;* and pass one-third of their lives in watching the flow, and the remainder in watching the ebb, of its mighty tide. The inundation begins in May, attains its full height in August, and thenceforth diminishes, until freshly swollen in the following year. The stream, economized within its channel as far as the first cataract, spreads abroad its beneficent deluge over the vast valley. Then it is that Egypt presents the most striking of its Protean aspects, becoming an ar-

chipelago studded with green islands, and bounded only by the chain of the Lybian Hills and the purple range of the Mokattam Mountains. Every island is crowned with a village, or an antique temple, and shadowy with palm-trees or acacia groves. Every city becomes a Venice, and the bazaars display their richest and gayest cloths and tapestries to the illuminations that are reflected from the streaming streets. The earth is sheltered from the burning sun under the cool bright veil of waters; the labour of the husbandman is suspended, and it is the season of universal festivity. Boatmen alone are busy, but it would seem to be pleasant business; for the sound of music is never silent beneath those large, white sails, that now glitter in the moonlight, and now gleam ruddily, reflecting the fragrant watchfires on the deck.

This picture is of rare occurrence, however — the inundation seldom rising to a height greater than what is necessary for purposes of irrigitation, and presenting, alas! rather the appearance of a swamp than of an archipelago.

As the waters retire, vegetation seems to exude from every pore. Previous to its bath, the country, like Pelias, looked shrivelled, and faded, and worn out: a few days after — and old Egypt looks as good as new, wrapped in a richly green mantle embroidered with flowers.

As the Nile has everything his own way throughout his wide domains, he is capricious in proportion, and gives spring in October, and autumn in February. Another curious freak of his is to make his bed in the highest part of the great valley through which he runs: this bed is a sort of savings'-bank, by means of which the deposits of four thousand years have enabled him to rise in the world, and to rung along a causeway of his own.

Formerly, when vexed by the armaments of a Sesostris or the priestly pageants of a Pharaoh, the Nile required seven months to vent its murmurs to the sea. In modern times, it finds two sufficient: Damietta, of crusading memory, presides over one, and Rosetta, in Arabic "el Rashid," the birth-place of our old friend, Haroun, takes advantage of the other. The former is waited upon by Lake Menzaleh, where alone the real ibis and papyrus are now found — the latter looks eastward on Lake Bourlos, and westward over Aboukir Bay, of glorious memory.

'T is an old story now, that Battle of the Nile — but a brave story can never die of age; and, as the traveller passes by these silent and deserted shores, that have twice seen England's flag "triumphant over wave and war," he lives again in the stirring days when the scenery before him was the

arena whereon France and England contended for the empire of the East.

The Bay is wide, but dangerous from shoals: the line of deep blue water, and the old castle of Aboukir, map out the position of the French fleet on the first of August, 1798. Having landed Buonaparte and his army, Brueys lay moored in the form of a crescent, close along the shore. His vastly superior force,* and the strength of his position (protected towards the northward by dangerous shoals, and towards the westward by the castle and batteries), made him consider that position impregnable: and, on the strength of this conviction, he wrote to Paris that Nelson had purposely avoided him. Was he undeceived, when Hood, in the Zealous, made signal that the enemy was in sight, and a cheer of triumph burst from every ship in the British fleet? — that fleet which had swept the seas with bursting sails for six long weeks in search of its formidable foe, and now bore down upon him with fearless exultation.

Nelson had long been sailing in battle-order, and he now only lay-to in the offing till the rearward ships should come up. The soundings of that dangerous bay were unknown to him, but he knew that where there was room for a French ship to swing, there must be room for an Englishman to

* Nearly as three to two.

anchor at either side of him, and the closer the better.

As his proud and fearless fleet came on, he hailed Hood, to ask his opinion as to whether the action should commence that night; then, receiving the answer that he longed for, the signal for "close battle" flew from his mast head.

The delay thus caused to the Zealous gave Foley the lead; he showed the example of leading *inside* the enemy's line, and anchored by the stern alongside the second ship, thus leaving to Hood the first. The latter, putting his own generous construction on an accident, exclaimed, "Thank God, he has nobly left to his old friend still to lead the van!" Slowly and majestically, as the evening fell, the remainder of the fleet came on beneath a cloud of sail, receiving the fire of the castle and the batteries in portentous silence, only broken by the crash of spars, or the boatswain's whistle; each ship furling her sails calmly, as a sea-bird might fold its wings, and gliding tranquilly onward till she found her destined foe. Then the anchor dropped astern, and the fire burst from her bloody decks with a vehemence that showed how sternly it had been repressed *till* then.

The leading ships passed between the enemy and the shore; but, when the admiral came up, he led the remainder of the fleet along the seaward

side, thus doubling on the Frenchman's line, and placing it in a defile of fire. The sun went down soon after Nelson anchored; and his rearward ships were only guided through the darkness and the dangers of that formidable bay by the Frenchman's fire-flashing fierce welcome, as each enemy arrived and went hovering along the line, as he coolly scrutinized how he might draw most of that fire upon himself. The Bellerophon, with reckless gallantry, fastened on the gigantic Orient, by whose terrible artillery she was soon crushed and scorched into a wreck. Then she drifted helplessly to leeward, but *she had already done her work;* — the French admiral's ship was on fire, and through the roar of battle a whisper went for a moment that paralyzed every eager heart and hand: during that dread pause, the fight was suspended, the very wounded ceased to groan — yet the burning ship still continued to fire broadsides from her flaming decks — her gallant crew alone unawed by their approaching fate, and shouting their own brave requiem. At length, the terrible explosion came; and the column of flame that shot upward into the very sky for a moment rendered visible the whole surrounding scene, from the red flags aloft to the reddened decks below — the wide shore, with all its swarthy crowds, and the far-off glittering sea, with the torn and dismantled fleets. Then darkness and silence

came again, broken only by the shower of blazing fragments in which that brave ship fell upon the waters.

Till that moment, Nelson was ignorant how the battle went. He knew that every man was doing his duty, but he knew not how successfully; he had been wounded in the forehead, and found his way unnoticed to the deck in the suspense of the coming explosion. Its light was a fitting lamp for eye like his to read by. He saw his own proud flag still floating every where; and at the same moment his crew recognised their wounded chief. Their cheer of welcome was only drowned in the renewed roar of their artillery, which continued until it no longer found an answer, and silence had confessed destruction.

Morning rose upon an altered scene. The sun had set upon as proud a fleet as ever sailed from the gay shores of France: torn and blackened hulls now only marked the position they had then occupied; and where their admiral's ship *had* been, the blank sea sparkled in the sunshine. Two ships of the line and two frigates escaped, to be captured soon afterwards; but within the bay the tricolor was flying on board the Tonnant alone. As the Theseus approached to attack her, attempting to capitulate, she hoisted a flag of truce: "Your battle-flag — or none!" was the stern reply, as her ene-

my rounded-to, and the matches glimmered over her line of guns. Slowly and reluctantly, like an expiring hope, that pale flag fluttered down from her lofty spars, and the next that floated there was the banner of old England.

And now the battle was over — India was saved upon the shores of Egypt — the career of Buonaparte was checked,* and his navy was annihilated. Seven years later, that navy was revived, to perish utterly at Trafalgar — a fitting hecatomb for the obsequies of Nelson, whose life seemed to terminate as his mission was then and thus accomplished.

Arrived at Alexandria, the traveller is yet far distant from the Nile. The Canopic mouth was long ago closed up by the mud of Æthiopia, and the Arab conquerors of Egypt were obliged to form a canal to connect this sea-port with the river. Under the Mamelukes, this canal also had become choked up; and, her communication with the great vivifying stream thus ceasing, Alexandria languished — while Rosetta, like a vampire, fed on her decay,

* "Le principal but de l'expédition des Français en Orient, était d'abaisser la puissance Anglaise. C'est du Nil que devait partir l'armée qui allait donner de nouvelles destinées aux Indes . . . Les Français une fois maîtres des portes de Corfou, de Malte, et d'Alexandrie, la Méditerranée devenait un lac Français." — *Mémoires de Napoléon.*

and, notwithstanding her shallow waters, swelled suddenly to importance.

When Mehemet Ali rose to power, his clear intellect at once comprehended the importance of the ancient emporium. Alexandria was then become a mere harbour for pirates — the desert and the sea were gradually encroaching on its boundaries — but the Pasha ordered the desert to bring forth corn, and the sea to retire, and the mandate of this Eastern Canute was no idle word — it acted like an incantation to the old Egyptian spirit of great works. Up rose a stately city, containing 60,000 inhabitants, and as suddenly yawned the canal, which was to connect the new city with the Nile, and enable it to fulfil its destinies of becoming the emporium of three quarters of the globe.

We embarked in a canal boat (there is now a steamer), and passed, for some miles, along a causeway that separates the salt-water Lake Maadee from Lake Mareotis; nothing can be more desolate than the aspects of these two lonely lakes, stretching, with their low swampy shores, away to the horizon: they seem to have been born for one another; though the Pharaohs, like poor-law guardians, saw fit to separate them; their object, however — the reverse of the said poor-law — being to render Mareotis prolific. A vast mound was raised, which kept the salt lake at a respectful distance; and,

until the English invasion in 1801, or at least until the eighteenth century, the greater part of Mareotis was a fertile plain.

Buonaparte, after having defeated the Mamelukes at the Pyramids, had taken possession of Cairo. Having denied Christ in Europe, he acknowledged Mahomet in Asia; having butchered his prisoners at Jaffa, he was defeated by the Butcher* Pasha and Sir Sydney Smith, at Acre; having poisoned part of that army whom he called his "children," he started for Paris, and left the remainder to encounter alone those "storms that might veil his fame's ascending star." ** That remainder occupied Cairo, under the gallant and illfated Kleber. He had accepted, and was preparing to act upon, terms of capitulation from the Turks, which Lord Keith had, however, refused to ratify. The moment Sir Sydney Smith learned the English admiral's determination, he took upon himself to inform Kleber of the fact, and advised him to hold his position. The Turks exclaimed against this chivalrous notice as a treachery, and there were not a few found in England to echo the same cry; but the spirit that dictated the British sailor's act was understood in the deserts — a voice went forth among the tents of the Bedouin and the palaces of the despot, that

* Djezzar, Arabic for "butcher."

** Sir J. Hanmer

England preferred honour to advantage. Battles, since then, have been fought, and been forgotten — nations have come and gone, and left no trace behind them — but the memory of that noble truthfulness remained, expanding into a national characteristic; and at this hour in the streets of Cairo our countrymen may hear the Arabs swear "by the honour of an Englishman."

It was midnight when we arrived at Atféh, the point of junction with the Nile; and a regular African storm, dark and savage, was howling among the mud-built houses when we disembarked there, ankle-deep in slime. A crowd of half-naked, swarthy Arabs, with flaring torches, looked as if they were Pluto's police ready to escort us to the realms of darkness, jabbering and shouting violently, in chorus with the barking of the wild dogs, the roaring of the wind, and the growling of the camels, as a hail-storm of boxes and portmanteaus were showered on their backs; donkeys were braying, women shrieking, Englishmen cursing sonorously; and the lurid moon, as she hurried through the clouds, seemed a torch waved by some fury, to light up this scene of infernal confusion.

We are now upon the sacred river — but it is

too dark to see its waters gleam, and the shrieking of the steamer prevents us from hearing its waters flow. Alas! — What a paragraph! And, is it possible, ye Naïads of the Nile, that your deified stream must now be harrowed up by a greasy, grunting steamship, like the *parvenues* rivers of vulgar Europe? That stream — that, gushing from beyond the Emerald Mountains, scatters gold around it in its youth — that has borne the kings of India to worship at ancient Meröe — murmured beneath the cradle of Moses, and foamed round the golden prow of Cleopatra's barge! Unhappy river! Thou, who, like Ixion, in thy warm youth hast loved the gorgeous clouds of Ethiopia, must now expiate thy raptures on the wheel. Yes! for thy old days of glory are gone by; thy veil of mystery is rent away, and with many another sacrificial victim of the ideal to the practical, thou must, forsooth, become useful and respectable, and convey cockneys!

We were soon fizzing merrily up the stream; and, after a night spent upon the hard boards in convulsive but vain attempts to sleep, we hurried on deck to see the sun shine over this renowned river. Must I confess it? We could see nothing but high banks of dark mud, or swamps of festering slime, with here and there a dead buffalo, that lay rotting on the river's edge, half devoured by a flock of goitrous-looking vultures. In some hours, however,

we emerged * from the Rosetta branch, on which we had hitherto been boiling our way to the great river, and henceforth the prospect began to improve. Villages sheltered by graceful groups of palm-trees, mosques, santons' tombs, green plains, and at length the desert — the most imposing sight in the world, except the sea. The day past slowly; the view had little variety; the wild fowl had ascertained the range of an English fowling-piece; the dinner was as cold as the climate would permit; the plates had no knives and forks, and an interesting-looking lady had a drum-stick between her teeth, as I pointed out to her the scene of the battle of the Pyramids, which now rose upon our view.

That sight restores us to good humour: we felt that we were actually in Egypt.

* The Delta is seldom visited by travellers, who hurry over the less interesting objects on their arrival, and are pretty well tired of Egypt on their return. Nevertheless, many ruins, and some boar-shooting, will well repay the antiquary and the sportsman in their respective vocations.

CHAPTER V.

CAIRO — ITS PORT-VIEW FROM WITHOUT — WITHIN — THE CITADEL.

While far as sight can reach, beneath as clear
And blue a heaven as ever blessed this sphere,
Gardens, and minarets, and glittering domes,
And high-built temples, fit to be the homes
Of mighty gods, and pyramids whose hour
Out-lasts all time, above the waters tower.

MOORE.

Morning found us anchored off Boulac, the port of Cairo. Toward the river, it is faced by factories and storehouses; within, you find yourself in a labyrinth of brown, narrow streets, that resemble rather rifts in some mud-mountain than anything with which architecture has had to do. Yet, here and there, the blankness of the walls is broken and varied by richly worked lattices, and specimens of arabesque masonry. Gaudy bazaars strike the eye and relieve the gloom, and the picturesque population that swarms everywhere keeps the interest awake.

On emerging from the lanes of Boulac, Cairo, Grand Cairo! opens on the view: and never yet did fancy flash upon the poet's eye a more superb illusion of power and beauty than the "city of Victory" *

* "El Kahira," the Arabic epithet of this city, means "the Victorious;" whence our word Cairo: in Arabic, "Misr."

presents from this distance. The bold range of Mokattam mountains is purpled by the rising sun; its craggy summits are cut clearly out against the glowing sky, as it runs like a promontory into an ocean of verdure; here, wavy with a breezy plantation of olives; there, darkened with acacia groves. Just where the mountain sinks upon the plain, the citadel stands upon its last eminence; and, widely spread beneath it, lies the city, a forest of minarets with palm-trees intermingled, and the domes of innumerable mosques rising like enormous bubbles over the sea of houses. Here and there, richly green gardens are islanded within the sea, and the whole is girt round with picturesque towers and ramparts, occasionally revealed through vistas of the wood of sycamores and fig-trees that surround it. It has been said that "God the first garden made, and the first city, Cain;" here, both creations seem commingled with the happiest effect.

The approach to Cairo is a spacious avenue lined with the olive or the sycamore; here and there, the white marble of a fountain gleams through the foliage, or a palm-tree waves its plumy head above the santon's tomb. Along this highway a masquerading-looking crowd is swarming towards the city; ladies wrapped closely in white veils, women of the lower class carrying water on their heads, and covered only with a long blue garment, that reveals too

plainly the exquisite symmetry of the young, and the hideous deformity of the elders; here, are camels perched upon by black slaves, magpied with white napkins round their head and loins; there, are portly merchants, with turbans and long pipes, gravely smoking on their knowing-looking donkeys: here, an Arab dashes through the crowd at full gallop, or a European, still more haughtily, shoves aside the pompous-looking, bearded throng. Water-carriers, calenders, Armenians, barbers, — all the *dramatis personæ* of the Arabian Nights, are there.

And now we reach the city wall, with its towers as strong as mud can make them. It must not be supposed that this mud architecture is of the same nature that the expression would convey in Europe. No! — overshadowed by palm-trees, and a crimson banner with its star and crescent waving from the battlements, and camels couched beneath its shade, and swarthy Egyptians in many-coloured robes, reposing in every niche; all this makes a mud wall appear a very respectable fortification in this land of illusion.

And now we are within the city! Protean powers! what a change! A labyrinth of dark, filthy, intricate lanes and alleys; in which every smell and sight from which nose and eye revolt meet one at every turn, (and one is always turning). The stateliest streets are not above twelve feet wide; and, as the

upper stories arch over them toward one another, only a narrow serpentine seam of blue sky appears between the toppling verandahs of the winding streets. Occasionally, a string of camels, bristling with faggots of firewood, sweeps the streets effectually of their passengers; lean, mangy dogs are continually running between your legs, which afford a tempting passage in this petticoated place; beggars, in rags quivering with vermin, are lying in every corner of the street; now a bridal, or a circumcising procession, squeezes along, with music that might madden a drummer; now the running footmen of some bey or pasha endeavour to jostle you towards the wall; unless they recognise you as an Englishman — one of that race whom they think the devil himself can't frighten, or teach manners to.

Notwithstanding all these annoyances, however, the streets of Cairo present a source of unceasing amusement and curiosity to the stranger. It has not so purely an Oriental character as Damascus, and the intermixture of Europeans gives it a character of its own, and affords far wider scope for adventure than the secluded and solemn capital of Syria. The bazaars are very vivid and varied, and each is devoted to a peculiar class of commodities: thus you have the Turkish, the Persian, the Frank bazaars; the armourers', the weavers', the jewellers' quarters. These bazaars are, for the most part,

covered in, and there is a cool and quiet gloom about them which is very refreshing; there is also an air of profound repose in the turbaned merchants as they sit cross-legged on their counters, embowered by the shawls and silks of India and Persia; they look as if they were for ever sitting for their portraits, and seldom move a muscle, unless it be to breathe a cloud of smoke from their bearded lips, or to turn their vivid eyes upon some expected customer — those eyes that seem to be the only living part of their countenance.

If you make a purchase of any value, your merchant will probably offer you a pipe, and make room for you to seat yourself on his counter. If you are sufficiently *citoyen du monde* to accept the hospitality, you will be repayed by a very pleased look on the part of your host, and a pipe of such tobacco as only these squatters of the East can procure. The curious and varied drama of Oriental life is acted before you, as you tranquilly puff away, and add to the almost imperceptible yet fragrant cloud that fills the bazaar. Now, by your host's order, a little slave presents you with a tiny cup of rich coffee, and you raise your hand to your head as you accept it; your entertainer repeats the gesture, and mutters a prayer for your health.

Let us purchase an embroidered vest, or a silk scarf from the venerable Abou Habib, for the sake

of his snow-white beard and turban. He makes a movement, as if to rise, of which there is as little chance as of the sun at midnight; he points to the carpet on which he "hopes to Allah that your beneficent shadow may fall." You ascend his counter, and sit down in the place and attitude of a tailor with perfect gravity. Your dragoman lounges at the door, to explain the sights that pass in the streets, or the sounds that issue from the lips of your entertainer. Conversation is not considered a necessary part of a visit, or of agreeability; and if you will only stay quiet, and look pleased, you may pass for a very agreeable person. You have, therefore, full leisure for observation, while you are enjoying society *à l'orientale.*

Let us make a purchase, and accept the pipe graciously offered by our merchant. Then, in the absence of any claim on our ears, let us use our eyes and look about us. A house is being rebuilt nearly opposite; masons, in turbans and long blue chemises, and red slippers down at the heel, are engaged, as if in pantomime, with much gesticulation, but little effect: a score of children are supplying bricks and mortar in little handfuls, chanting a measured song, as if to delude themselves into the idea that they are at play. Now, a durweesh, naked except for a napkin, or a bit of sheepskin round his loins, presents himself, claiming rather

than asking alms: his wild, fierce eyes, in which the gleaming of insanity conveys their title to *your* forbearance, and to the Moslem's reverence — his long, matted, filthy hair, falling over his naked, sun-scorched shoulders — and his savage gluttony — proclaim his calling — a something between a friar and a saint of Islam. Here, is a water-carrier, with his jar of cool sherbet, adorned with fresh flowers: he tinkles little brazen saucers to announce his progress, and receives half a farthing for each draught. There, is a beggar devouring his crust, but religiously leaving a portion of it in some clean spot for the wild dogs. Now, an old man stoops to pick up a piece of paper, and to put it by, "lest," says he, "the name of God be written on it, and it be defiled." Here, is a lady of some hareem, mounted *à la Turque*, on her donkey, and attended by her own slave, and her husband's eunuch; she might seem to be a mere bundle of linen, but that a pair of brilliant eyes relieve the ghastly appearance that might figure well in a *tableau* as an Irish "Banshee."

All these, and a thousand other quaint personages, are perpetually passing and repassing, with hand upon the heart as they meet an acquaintance, or on the head if they meet a superior. But it is time to return our pipes, and to pursue our researches through the city.

Mean-looking and crowded as is the greater part of Cairo, there are some extensive squares and stately houses. Among the former is the Esbekeyeh, by which you enter the city, a place about a mile in circumference, occupied by a large plantation, divided by straight avenues, and surrounded by a dirty canal. A wide road, shaded by palm and sycamore trees, borders this canal, forming a street of tall, mud-coloured houses of very various architecture, but delicately and elaborately carved. The best buildings in the Esbekeyeh are the palaces of Ibrahim and Abbas Pasha, and the new Hôtel d'Orient, in which we had pleasant apartments: — they looked over a cemetery, it is true, which was haunted by tribes of ghoul-like dogs; but beyond this were gardens and kiosks, and palm-groves, and a glimpse of the Nile, and, above all, the Pyramids, far in the distance, yet by their magnitude curiously confounding the perspective. The Roumeleyeh is another wide space, where fairs and markets are held, criminals executed, and other popular amusements celebrated. The most interesting building in Cairo is undoubtedly the citadel, overlooking the city, and containing Mehemet Ali's "town-house." Here are the remains of Saladin's palace, and the commencement of a magnificent mosque, from whose terraced roof there is perhaps the finest view in the world. All Lower Egypt lies spread out, as in a

map, before you — one great emerald, set in the golden desert, bossed with the mountains that surround it. *

To me, the most interesting spot within these crime-stained precincts was that where the last of the Mamelukes escaped from the bloody treachery of Mehemet Ali. Soon after the Pasha was confirmed by the Porte in the viceroyalty of Egypt, he summoned the Mameluke Beys to a consultation on the approaching war against the Wahabees in Arabia. As his son Toussoun had been invested with the dignity of Pasha of the second order, the occasion was one of festivity as well as business. The Beys came, mounted on their finest horses. in magnificent uniforms, forming the most superb cavalry in the world. After a very flattering reception from the Pasha, they were requested to parade in the court of the citadel. They entered the fortification unsuspectingly — the portcullis fell behind the last of the proud procession: a moment's glance revealed to them their doom: they dashed forwards — in

* There is in this citadel a place of great interest to antiquarian cockneys, because it is called Joseph's Well, although owing its origin to the Saracen * — not the patriarch; and also a respectable armoury of native workmanship, a printing press, and a mint, which coins annnally about £ 200,000 sterling in gold. This citadel was built by Saladin, and was very strong from its position, before gunpowder gave the command of it to a height further up on the Mokattam mountain.

* Saladin's name was Youssoof, Arabic for Joseph.

vain! — before, behind, around them, nothing was visible but blank, pitiless walls and barred windows; the only opening was towards the bright blue sky; even that was soon darkened by their funeral pile of smoke, as volley after volley flashed from a thousand muskets behind the ramparts upon their defenceless and devoted band. Startling and fearfully sudden as was their death, they met is as became their fearless character — some with arms crossed upon their mailed bosoms, and turbaned heads devoutly bowed in prayer; some with flashing swords and fierce curses, alike unavailing against their dastard and ruthless foe. All that chivalrous and splendid throng, save one, sank rapidly beneath the deadly fire into a red and writhing mass — that one was Emim Bey. He spurred his charger over a heap of his slaughtered comrades, and sprang upon the battlements. It was a dizzy height, but the next moment he was in the air — another, and he was disengaging himself from his crushed and dying horse amid a shower of bullets. He escaped, and found safety in the sanctuary of a mosque, and ultimately in the deserts of the Thebaid.

The objects of interest in the neighbourhood of Cairo are very numerous. Leaving for the present the Pyramids, let us canter off to Heliopolis, the On of Scripture. It is only five miles of a pathway shaded by sycamore and plane-trees, from

which we emerge occasionally into green savannahs, or luxuriant corn-fields, over which the beautiful white ibises are hovering in flocks.

In Heliopolis, the Oxford of old Egypt, stood the great Temple of the Sun. Here the beautiful and the wise studied love and logic 4000 years ago. Here Joseph was married to the fair Asenath. Here Plato and Herodotus pursued philosophy and history; and here the darkness that veiled the Great Sacrifice on Calvary was observed by a heathen astronomer.* We found nothing, however, on the site of this ancient city, except a small garden of orange-trees, with a magnificent obelisk in the centre.

These obelisks seem never to have been isolated in the position for which they were originally hewn out of the granite quarries of Syene. They terminated avenues of columns or of statues, or stood in pairs before the entrance of the Propylea, and bore in hieroglyphic inscriptions the destination of the temples to which they belonged.

People talk of the ruins of the temple of the Sun as being discoverable here; and there are reports about a sphynx, but we could discover neither. Here is the garden of Metarieh, where grew the celebrated balm of Gilead, presented by the Queen of Sheba to Solomon, and brought to Egypt by

* Dionysius, the Areopagite.

Cleopatra. On our return towards Cairo, we were shown the fountain which refreshed and the tree which shaded the Holy Family in their flight to Egypt.

Another day we went to Shoobra, the palace and garden of Mehemet Ali. We rode along under a noble avenue of sycamores, just wide enough to preserve their shade, and, at the end of three miles, came to a low and unpretending gateway, picturesque, however, and covered with parasites. Without, were tents and troops, and muskets piled, and horses ready saddled; but within, all was peace and silence.

A venerable gardener, with a long white beard, received us at the entrance, and contucted us through the fairy-like garden, of which he might have passed for the guardian genius. There were very few flowers; but shade and greenery are everything in this glaring climate; and it was passing pleasant to stroll along these paths all shadowy with orange-trees, whose fruit, "like lamps in a night of green," hung temptingly over our heads. The fragrance of large beds of roses mingled with that of the orange flower, and seemed to repose on the quiet airs of that calm evening. In the midst of the garden we came to a vast pavilion, glittering like porcelain, and supported on light pillars, forming cloisters that surrounded an immense marble basin, in the centre

of which sparkling waters gushed from a picturesque fountain. Gaily painted little boats for the ladies of the hareem floated on the surface of this lake, through whose clear depths gleamed shoals of gold and silver fishes. In each corner of the building there were gilded apartments, with divans, tables, mirrors, and all the simple furniture of an eastern palace, in which books or pictures are never found.*

The setting sun threw his last shadows on the distant Pyramids as we lay upon the marble steps, inhaling the odours of the orange and pomegranate groves — dreamily listening to the vespers of the busy birds, the far-off hum of the city, and the faint murmur of the great river.

The evening breeze was sighing among the palms and the columns of the palace, when we started; a brilliant moon lighted our gallop back to Cairo, whose gates were long since closed, but opened easily to a bribe.

In most cities we find a fringe of suburbs that prepares us for the transition from busy streets to silent fields; but at Damascus, Jerusalem, and Cairo, the moment you issue from the gates you are in the

* The Koran is a library in itself to the Moslem. With respect to pictures, they take literally the injunction against "making a likeness of anything in heaven or earth." Moreover, they suppose that every painter or sculptor will be bound at the resurrection to provide all his human creations with soul. Would that the Genius of modern art would accept this as an earthly obligation!

desert, and the hyæna and the Arab prowl within hearing of the citizen. In a lonely valley, about a mile from Cairo, stand the tombs of the Mamelukes: these are mausolean palaces of great beauty and the richest Saracenic architecture; they are now fast falling to decay, and only inhabited, or rather haunted, by some outcast Arabs and troops of wild dogs. They form a grand cemetery of their own, surrounded by the desert.

About five miles beyond these tombs is the "petrified forest:" it is a vast, shelterless wilderness of sand, strewn with what seemed the chips of some gigantic carpenter's shop. There are no roots — much less any appearance of a standing tree. I have seen fragments of this petrified wood in other parts of the desert, which seemed to belong to the sycamore and palm-tree. They are found in the driest and most shelterless places, and when living must have had a hard time of it — exposed, like Niobe, to all the arrows of Apollo; why, however, like her, they should have turned to stone, not even the naturalists — those mythologists of phenomena — have attempted to explain.

One of the sights which amused me most was a chicken-hatching oven. This useful establishment is at some distance from the walls, and gives life to some millions of chickens annually. It seems that the hens of Egypt are not given to sedentary occu-

pations; having been hatched themselves by machinery, they do not feel called upon to hatch. They seem to consider that they have discharged every duty to society in producing a mere egg: no domestic anxiety ruffles their bosoms; they care not whether their offspring becomes a fritter or a fowl, an omelette or a game-cock. We entered their foundling hospital — a gloomy and filthy hut, in which a woman was squatting, with a dark, little, naked imp at her bosom; she sat sentry over a hole in the wall, and insisted clamorously on back-sheesh; having satisfied her in this particular, we introduced ourselves, with considerable difficulty, into a narrow passage, on either side of which were three chambers, strewn with fine mould, and covered with eggs, among which a naked Egyptian walks delicately as Agag, whilst he turns them with most hen-like anxiety. The heat was about 100°, the smell like that of Harrowgate water, and the floor covered with egg-shells and struggling chicklings. The same heat is maintained day and night, and the same wretched hen-man passes his life in turning eggs. His fee is one-half the receipt; he returns fifty chickens for every hundred eggs that he receives.

It was the feast of lanterns. As we strolled by the soft moonlight, under the avenues of sycamore

and olive-trees that shadow the Esbekeyeh, we could see through the vistas an extensive encampment in the distance; innumerable lamps of various colours, and painted lanterns, shone among the tents and the dark foliage; not only did they glitter on every bough, and on a thousand banners, but scaffoldings were raised, on which they hung in garlands and festoons of light. The very sky above them wore the appearance of a faint dawn: every glimpse of the canals, every leaf in all the grove, shone with their reflected radiance. Of course, *we* were soon struggling through the many-coloured crowd of the prophet's worshippers that thronged the encampment.

A Moslem mob is good-tempered and patient beyond belief; and that sea of turbans stagnated as calmly as if every wave of it was exactly in the position that he wished to occupy. Each tent was crowded to excess by performers or aspirants in a most singular religious ceremony: a ring of men, standing so closely side by side that they supported each other in their exhausting devotions, were vehemently shouting "Allah," or rather "Ullah," in chorus: they moved their bodies up and down, keeping strict time to this monotonous chant, and exhaling their breath pantingly at every exclamation. Many were foaming at the mouth, some incoherent — all utterly exhausted; and these fell, from

time to time, among the crowd that was quietly squatted within their excited circle; they were instantly succeeded by others, and this proceeding continued till morning; every tent had its tranquil mob of squatters, surrounded by a convulsive ring. None of the crowd appeared to take the slightest interest or curiosity about the business, before or after they had performed their own part. They then lighted their pipes, where they had room to do so, and gently struggled towards the flower-ornamented stalls, where coffee and sherbet were supplied.

The next morning all Cairo was in movement to witness the ceremony of the *Doseh*, and we reached the Esbekeyeh just as the procession of Durweeshes advanced into the square, escorting their Sheikh, who alone was on horse-back. They marched in a close column, four abreast, waving flags belonging to the different districts in the town; and bearing a large green banner before the Sheikh, chief preacher at the mosque of Hassaneen. Under the guidance of our invaluable dragoman, Mahmoud, we struggled into the procession, forming a part of it, until it reached an open space, where the moving mass suddenly stood still: a cry of "Allah-lah-lah-lah!" was raised, and our crowd suddenly divided into two, leaving a canal with human banks between them.

The Durweeshes immediately flung themselves

crosswise on the ground in this canal, with their faces downward lying as closely side by side as they could pack themselves. Then another cry of "Allah-'ah-'ah!" was raised — two or three men ran along over the prostrate bodies, arranging them more compactly — and then, with another shout of "Allah!" that made the trees tremble, on came the Sheikh, his horse caracolling along that living path, guided by two men who walked on a pavement of heads and feet. As the horse passed over him, each Durweesh started to his feet; many of them were foaming at the mouth, and many were in fits, but the people maintained that no person was ever hurt, as the horse was upheld by supernatural agency. The four-footed brute evidently did not share in the superstition, for he trod as if he were walking on burning coals.

I went to visit the slave-markets, one of which is held without the city, in the courtyard of a deserted mosque. I was received by a mild looking Nubian, with a large white turban wreathed over his swarthy brows, and a bernoose, or cloak, of white and brown striped hair-cloth, strapped round his loins. He rose and laid down his pipe as I entered, and led me in silence to inspect his stock. I found about thirty girls scattered in groups about an inner court: the gate was open, but there seemed no thought of escape: where could they go, poor

things? — "the world was not their friend, or the world's law." Some were grinding millet between two stones; some were kneading the flour into bread; some were chatting in the sunshine, some sleeping in the shade. One or two looked sad and lonely enough, until their gloomy countenances were lighted up with hope — the hope of being bought! Their faces were, for the most part, wofully blank; not with the blankness of pleasure, but of intelligence; and many wore an awfully animal expression. Yet among them were several figures of exquisite symmetry, which, had they been indeed the bronze statues they resembled, would have attracted the admiration of thousands, and been valued at twenty times the price that was set upon these immortal beings. Their proprietor showed them off as a horse-dealer does *his* cattle, examining their teeth, removing their body-clothes, and exhibiting their paces: he asked only from twenty-five to thirty pounds sterling for the best and comeliest of them. The Abyssinians are the most prized of the African slaves, from their superior gentleness and intelligence; those of the Galla country are the most numerous and hardy. The former have well-shaped heads, beautiful eyes, an agreeable brown colour, and shining, smooth black tresses. The latter have low foreheads, crisp hair, sooty complexions, thick lips, and projecting jaws.

CHAPTER VI.

WOMAN — THE HAREEM.

Thus in the ever-closed hareem,
 As in the open Western home,
Sheds womanhood her starry gleam
 Over our being's busy foam.
Through latitudes of varying faith
 Thus trace we still her mission sure,
To lighten life, to sweeten death,
 And all for others to endure.

R. M. MILNES.

On entering a strange country, its women are the first objects of interest, to the moralist as well as to the epicurean; to the former, because the education of a people, and the framework of its society, depend mainly upon maternal and domestic character; to the latter, because almost every grace and charm of daily life is owing to her influence, or interwoven with her being — "On a dit, qu'il y a de la femme dans tout ce qu'on aime."

Among the lower classes of all nations, especially in the country, the life and habits of women approximate more or less to that of men in an inverse proportion to their civilization: as they share with the ruder sex their labours, hardships, and daily occupation, among savage tribes almost the only distinction between the sexes is physical. It is of

the Moslem women of the middle and upper classes that I am now about to speak, and I do so with a diffidence proportioned to such mysterious matters.

Difficult a study as woman presents in all countries, that difficulty deepens almost into impossibility in a land where even to look upon her is a matter of danger or of death. The seclusion of the hareem is preserved in the very streets by means of an impenetrable veil; the well-bred Egyptian averts his eyes as she passes by; she is ever to remain an object of mystery; and the most intimate acquaintance never inquires after the wife of his friend, or affects to know of her existence.* This very mystery, however, piques the often baffled inquirer; and between Europeans, who have become almost Egyptian, and Egyptians who have become almost European, one may obtain some information even on this delicate subject.

The Eastern woman seems as happy in her lot as her European sister, notwithstanding the plurality of wives that her lord indulges in, or ventures upon. In her "public opinion's law," there is no more disparagement in occupying the second place as a wife, than there is in Europe as a daughter. The manners of patriarchal ages remain in Egypt as un-

* If alluded to at all by other lips than those of her proprietor, or written to, it is as "the guarded lady," — "the concealed jewel." — LANE.

changed as its monuments; and the people of Cairo think as little of objecting to a man's marrying a second wife, as those of Memphis of questioning the legitimacy of Joseph. The Koran, following the example of the Jewish doctors, allows only four wives to each Mussulman, and even of this limited allowance they seldom avail themselves to its fullest extent. Some hareems contain two hundred females, including wives, mothers-in-law, concubines, and the various slaves belonging to each; but these feminine barracks seem very different from what such establishments would be in Europe; in the hareem there is as much order and decorum as in an English quaker's home: it is guarded as the tiger guards his young; but its inmates consider this as a compliment, and fancy themselves neglected if not closely watched. This cause for complaint seldom occurs, for the Egyptian has no blind confidence in the strength of woman's character or woman's love. He holds to the aphorism of Mahomet in this matter, "If you set butter in the sun, it will surely melt;" and considers it safer, if not more glorious, to keep her out of the reach of temptation, than to run the chance of her overcoming it when exposed to its encounter.

Born and brought up in the hareem, women never seem to pine at its imprisonment: like cage-born birds, they sing among their bars, and discover in their aviaries a thousand little pleasures invisible

to eyes that have a wider range. To them, in their calm seclusion, the strifes of the battling world come softened and almost hushed; they only hear the far-off murmur of life's stormy sea; and, if their human lot dooms them to their cares, they are as transient as those of childhood.

Let them laugh on, in their happy ignorance of a better lot, while around them is gathered all that their lord can command of luxury and pleasantness: his wealth is hoarded for them alone; and the time is weary that he passes away from his home and his hareem. The sternest tyrants are gentle there: Mehemet Ali never refused a woman's prayer; and even Ali Pasha was partly humanized by his love for Emineh. In the time of the Mamelukes, criminals were led to execution blindfolded, because, if they met a woman and could touch her garment, they were saved, as by a sanctuary, whatever was their crime. Thus idolized, watched, and guarded, the Egyptian woman's life is, nevertheless, entirely in the power of her lord, and her death is the inevitable penalty of his dishonour. No piquant case of *crim. con.* ever amuses the Egyptian public: the injured husband is his own judge and jury; his only "gentlemen of the long robe" are his eunuchs; and the knife or the Nile the only damages. The law never interferes in these little domestic arrangements. . . . .

Poor Fatima! shrined as she was in the palace of a tyrant, the fame of her beauty stole abroad through Cairo. She was one amongst a hundred in the hareem of Abbas Pasha, a man stained with every foul and loathsome vice; and who can wonder, though many may condemn, if she listened to a daring young Albanian, who risked his life to obtain but a sight of her! Whether she *did* listen or not, none can ever know; but the eunuchs saw the glitter of the Arnaut's arms, as he leaped from the terrace into the Nile and vanished in the darkness. . . . The following night, a merry English party dined together on board Lord Exmouth's boat, as it lay moored off the Isle of Rhoda; conversation had sunk into silence, as the calm night came on; a faint breeze floated perfumes from the gardens over the star-lit Nile, and scarcely moved the clouds that rose from the chibouque; a dreamy languor seemed to pervade all nature, and even the city lay hushed in deep repose — when suddenly a boat, crowded with dark figures among which arms gleamed, shot out from one of the arches of the palace; it paused under the opposite bank, where the water rushed deep and gloomily along, and for a moment a white figure glimmered along the boat's dark crew; there was a slight movement and a faint splash — and then — the river flowed on as merily as if poor

Fatima still sang her Georgian song to the murmur of its waters. . . . .

I was riding one evening along the banks of the Mareotis; the low lands, half swamp, half desert, was level as the lake: there was no sound, except the ripple of the waves along the far extended shore, and the heavy flapping of the pelican's wings as she rose from the water's edge. Not a palm-tree raised its plumy head, not a shrub crept along the ground; the sun was low, but there was nothing to cast a shadow over the monotonous waste, except a few Moslem tombs with their sculptured turbans: these stood apart from every sign of life, and even of their kindred dead, like those upon the Lido at Venice. As I paused to contemplate this scene of desolation, an Egyptian hurried past me with a bloody knife in his hand; his dress was mean and ragged, but his countenance was one that the father of Don Carlos might have worn; he never raised his eyes as he rushed by: — my groom, who just then came up, told me he had slain his wife, and was going to her father's village to denounce her . . . .

My boat was moored in the little harbour of Assouan, the old Syene, the boundary between Egypt and Ethiopia; opposite, lies Elephantina, the "Isle of Flowers," strewed with ruins, and shaded by magnificent palm-trees; the last eddies of the

cataract of the Nile foam round dark red granite cliffs, which rise precipitously from the river, and are piled into a mountain crowned by a ruined Saracenic castle. A forest of palm-trees divides the village from the quiet shore on whose silvery sands my tent was pitched. A man in an Egyptian dress saluted me in Italian, and in a few moments was smoking my chibouque, by invitation, and sipping coffee by my side: he was very handsome; but his faded cheek and sunken eye showed hardship and suffering, and he spoke in a low and humble voice. In reply to my question, as to how a person of his appearance came into this remote region, he told me that he had been lately practising as a surgeon in Alexandria; he had married a Levantine girl, whose beauty was to him as "la faccia del cielo:" he had been absent from his home, and she had betrayed him. On his return, he met her with a smiling countenance; in the evening, he accompanied her to a deep well, whither she went to draw water, and, as she leant over it, he threw her in. As he said this, he paused, and placed his hands upon his ears, as if he still heard her dying shriek. He then continued: "I have fled from Alexandria till the affair is blown over: I was robbed near Siout, and have supported myself miserably ever since, by giving medical advice to the poor country people: I shall soon return, and all will be forgotten. If I

had not avenged myself, her own family, you know, must have done so." And so this woman-murderer smoked on, and continued talking in a low and gentle voice till the moon was high; then he went his way, and I saw him no more.

The Egyptian has no home — at least, in the English sense of that sacred word: his sons are only half brothers, and generally at enmity with each other; his daughters are transplanted while yet children into some other hareem; and his wives, when their beauty is gone by, are frequently divorced without a cause, to make room for some younger rival. The result is, that the Egyptian — a sensualist and slave — is only fit to be a subject in what prophecy foretold his country should become — "the basest of all kingdoms."

The women have all the insipidity of children, without their innocence or sparkling freshness. Their beauty, voluptuous and soulless, appeals only to the senses; it has none of that pure and ennobling influence

> "That made us what we are — the great, the free —
> And bade earth bow to England's chivalry."

The Moslem purchases his wife as he does his horse: he laughs at the idea of honour and of love: the armed eunuch and the close-barred window are

the only safeguards of virtue that he relies on. Every luxury lavished on the Odalisque is linked with some precaution, like the iron fruit and flowers in the madhouse at Naples, that seem to smile round those whom they imprison. Nor is it for her own sake, but that of her master, that woman is supplied with every luxury that wealth can procure. As we gild our aviaries, and fill them with exotics native to our foreign birds, in order that their song may be sweet and their plumage bright; so the King of Babylon built the Hanging Gardens for the mountain girl, who pined and lost her beauty among the level plains of the Euphrates. The Egyptian is quite satisfied if his Nourmahal * be in "good condition:" mindless himself, what has he to do with mind?

The Egyptian woman, obliged to share her husband's affection with a hundred others in *this* world, is yet further supplanted in the next by the Houris, a sort of she-angel, of as doubtful a character as even a Moslem paradise could well tolerate; nay, more, it is a very moot point among Mussulman D. D.s whether women have any soul at all, or not. I believe their chance of immortality rests chiefly on the tradition of a conversation of Mahomet with an old woman who importuned him for a good place in paradise. "Trouble me not," said the

* Light of the hareem.

vexed husband of Cadijah;* "there *can* be no old women in paradise." Whereupon the aged applicant made such troublous lamentation, that he diplomatically added, "because the old will then all be made young again." I can find no allusion to woman's immortality in all the Koran, except incidentally, as where "all men and women are to be tried at the last day," and this is but poor comfort for those whom "angels are painted fair to look like."

Women are not enjoined to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, but they are permitted to do so. They are not enjoined to pray; but the Prophet seemed to think that it could do them no harm, provided they prayed in their own houses and not in the mosques, where they might interfere with, or share, the devotion of those who had real business there.

In fine, women receive no religious education; they seldom, if ever, pray; and their heaven, if they have one, is some second-hand sort of paradise, very different from that of their husbands — unless, as I have observed, "by particular desire."

Nothing can be more hideous than the Arab woman of the street; nothing more pituresque than her of the hareem. The former presents a mass of

* She was fifteen years older than himself, the foundress of his fortune, and yet more useful to him as his first convert.

white, shroud-like drapery, waddling along on a pair of enormous yellow boots, with one brilliant eye gleaming above the veil which is drawn *across* the face. The lower classes wear only a very loose, long blue frock, and appear anxious to conceal nothing except their faces, in which they consider that identity alone consists. As these women cannot spare the hands to the exclusive use of their veils, they wear a sort of snout, or long, black, tapering veil, bound over the cheek-bones, and supported from the forehead by a string of beads.

Take one of these, an ugly, old, sun-scorched hag, with a skin like a hippopotamus, and a veil-snout like an elephant's trunk; her scanty robe scarcely serving the purposes of a girdle; her hands, feet, and forehead tattooed of a smoke colour: and there is scarcely a more hideous spectacle on earth. But the Lady of the Hareem, on the other hand, — couched gracefully on a rich Persian carpet strewn with soft pillowy cushions — is as rich a picture as admiration ever gazed on. Her eyes, if not as dangerous to the heart as those of our own country, where the sunshine of intellect gleams through a heaven of blue, are, nevertheless, perfect in their kind — and at least as dangerous to the senses. Languid, yet full — brimful of life; dark, yet very lustrous! liquid, yet clear as stars; they are compared by their poets to the shape of the almond,

and the bright timidness of the gazelle's. The face is delicately oval, and its shape is set off by the gold-fringed turban, the most becoming headdress in the world: the long, black, silken tresses are braided from the forehead, and hang wavily on each side of the face — falling behind in a glossy cataract, that sparkles with such golden drops as might have glittered upon Danaë after the Olympian shower. A light tunic of pink or pale blue crape is covered with a long silk robe, open at the bosom, and buttoned thence downward to the delicately slippered little feet, that peep daintily from beneath the full silken trousers. Round the loins, rather than the waist, a cachmere shawl is loosely wrapped as a girdle; and an embroidered jacket, or a large silk robe with loose open sleeves, completes the costume. Nor is the fragrant water-pipe, with its long variegated serpent, and its jewelled mouth-piece, any detraction from the portrait.

Picture to yourself one of Eve's brightest daughters in Eve's own loving land. The woman-dealer has found among the mountains that perfection in a living form which Praxiteles scarcely realized, when inspired fancy wrought out its ideal in marble. Silken scarfs, as richly coloured and as airy as the rainbow, wreathe her round, from the snowy brow to the finely rounded limbs, half buried in billowy cushions: the attitude is the very poetry of repose

— languid it may be — but glowing life thrills beneath that flower-soft exterior, from the varying cheek and flashing eye, to the henna-dyed, taper fingers that capriciously play with her rosary of beads. The blaze of sunshine is round her kiosk, but *she* sits in the softened shadow so dear to the painter's eye. And so she dreams away the warm hours in such a calm of thought within, and sight or sound without, that she starts when the gold fish gleams in the fountain, or the breeze-ruffled roses shed a leaf upon her bosom.

The mystery, the seclusion, and the danger that surround the Odalisque may be perilously interesting to the romantic; but, to matter-of-fact people like myself, an English fireside, a Scottish mountain, or an Irish glen, have more attractions in this respect than any Zenana in Arabia: and the women who inhabit them, with purity in the heart, and intellect on the brow, and a cottage-bonnet on the head, are better worth risking life (nay, liberty) for, than all the turbaned voluptuous beauty of the East.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MOSLEM.

Where'er the sun before them shone,
And paved the world with gold,
They passed. Round Earth's most favoured zone
Their chief his turban rolled.
From Hagar's desert, Ishmael's plains,
To Ocean's western fold,
They reared their crescent-crowned fanes,
And cloistered fountains cold.

AUBREY DE VERE.

How comes it that almost every event of vivid romance, and visible chivalry, and poetry of action,* belongs to the olden time of man: while woman, his inspiration — his goddess as a pagan, his idol as a Christian — remains, to this day, in being and in influence the same? from the garden of Eden to the throne, ay, and the village-green of Europe, she has ever exercised despotic influence over the destinies of her "lord and master." At this day, we might meet Rebeccas at many a well, and Hagars in every desert of the East; Ediths, moreover, it may be, and Erminias in the cities thereof; but where is the hunter Ishmael to be found? where the rash, generous Esau — outlaw of the Israelitish

* "Sir Philip Sidney's life was poetry turned into action." — CAMPBELL.

fold! where are the chivalrous Saracen and the bold Crusader now? Alas! the two former are represented by a swindling, camel jobbing Sheikh, who will try to cheat you on Mount Sinai; the latter by the slavish Arab of the Nile, and the travelling dandy who employs him.

Far pleasanter would it be to enlist the reader as the follower of Mahomet through the following chapter, to take up the standard of the Prophet, and accompany it in its marvellous progress over the wide East, until it waved upon the towers of Jerusalem, and saw its green folds reflected in the waters of the Nile. Pleasanter would it be to go back to the old times of Egypt's mysterious history, when men were blended and confounded with the Gods, and the dreamlike glories of Karnak seemed almost to justify such presumption. However visionary the pursuit, and however faint the approximation to the truth, it is still pleasant to be humbugged by the priests with Herodotus; to go "body-snatching" in kingly tombs with brave Belzoni; or even to pick beetles, and read "handwriting on the walls" with Rosellini, Champollion, and Sir Gardner Wilkinson — pleasanter would any of these subjects be than the dry discussion of common-place life in these common-place times. But the attempt to introduce such subjects into these slight pages would be as vain as to embroider tapestry with

Cleopatra's Needle: glimpses of men and things in our own time are all that I can hope to offer; and if not vivid and comprehensive, they shall be at least faithful, as far as in me lies.

The graceful garb, the flowing beard, and the majestic appearance of Orientals, are very imposing to a stranger's eye. The rich colouring, the antique attitudes, the various complexions, that continually present themselves, form an unceasing series of "tableaux vivans" in an Eastern city. And when over these is poured the brilliant sunshine of their climate, now making strong shadow of a palmtree or a pile of Saracenic architecture, now gleaming upon jewel-hilted scimitars or gorgeous draperies, daily life wears an interest and picturesqueness unknown in this cloud-stricken land of hats and macintoshes.

The population of Cairo is composed of the descendants of Æthiopians, Romans, Greeks, Persians, Saracens, Arabs, and modern Europeans: the general maternity of the middle classes is Abyssinian. The variety of feature, form, colour, and character, resulting from such a mingling of races may be easily conceived. With respect to colour, the effect is pretty much the same as if all the tints in a paint-box were mixed up together, a variously modified brown being the result. In the women especially, the eye soon becomes accustomed to this complexion; and, as the Eastern people never

become reconciled to ours, it would appear that we are not of the "right colour," after all; that our swarthy brethren have plausible grounds for asserting that Adam and Eve were copper-coloured, or something more; and that pallor of skin first appeared when Cain was questioned as to the cause of his brother's death. One fact relating to colour struck me as singular, that the Turks and Arabs were no darker in the face than on the arms or other parts usually protected from the sun. On our return from Nubia, we found ourselves, on our first glimpse in a looking-glass after two months' absence, daguerreotyped into a very magpie complexion — face, neck, and hands, were Arab-dark; while forehead and arms looked white as a woman's from the contrast.

The Turk seems to suffer little change from the climate, notwithstanding the light-brown colour of his hair and moustaches; and his olive-coloured complexion never assumes that yellowish tinge that seems peculiar to the people of Lower Egypt. As you ascend the river, the colour of the natives deepens so gradually, that you might almost calculate the latitude by their shade. Strange to say, however, after you have arrived at, and passed through, a nation as black as midnight, with coarse, crisp hair, you emerge, farther on, amongst a people of light olive colour, with smooth, shining tresses;

these characteristics show the Abyssinian, who appears to be the purest and most distinct race in Africa. As the Egyptian generally has his family by Abyssinian wives or slaves, instead of, or in addition to, his Arab wives, he degenerates, in every generation, from the pure Arab race. The Bedouin requires a chapter to himself; the Osmanli, or Turk, will be introduced under the head of Constantinople; the Copt will appear in better company than he deserves, in speaking of the missionary schools; and our present concern is only with the Moslem-Egyptian-Arab of the cities and the villages along the Nile.

The childhood of this luckless specimen of man is passed in his mother's hareem in languor and effeminacy; he is not weaned for eighteen months, and his infancy is proportionately prolonged. At school, his education is limited chiefly to reading and writing, with sometimes a little arithmetic. Those who go to the University (in the mosque of el Azhar) acquire little more instruction of any practical utility. If an Egyptian can read, write, and repeat the greater part of the Koran, he is considered learned; if to this he adds some knowledge of Arab poetry, he is a very accomplished and "promising young man."

The chief studies in the University are Mahomet's religion, and Heaven knows whose jurisprudence:

medicine, chemistry, astronomy, and other sciences which are derived from the East, are very little cultivated. This, however, is to be understood only of the Egyptian when left to himself: Mehemet Ali has recently established numerous schools for boys: of these I shall speak when discussing the character of the Pasha.

An Egyptian infant is the most ill-favoured object in human creation; a name is applied to him with as little ceremony as a nickname is with us; and, indeed, there are not perhaps twenty different names distributed among the 200,000 Moslem inhabitants of Cairo; they are almost all taken from the Prophet or his immediate relations and followers. In our crew of ten men, we have five Mahmouds, or Mohammeds, two Ibraheems, three Abdallahs, and a Jad. As the Egyptian grows into childhood, he appears still more deformed, and extremely corpulent; but in manhood he becomes well-proportioned, stalwart, and sinewy; those at least who are employed upon the river. The city Egyptian never takes any active exercise, and passes nearly all his time squatted on his divan or counter. Many of the shopkeepers at Cairo are merely amateur tradesmen, being possessed of private property, and carrying on business, as good young ladies do in our bazaars, principally for amusement.

Along the river, and among the villages, the

poor man is occupied with agriculture, boat-building, or the most laborious occupation of pumping up water to irrigate the fields. His children of both sexes run about naked, or nearly so; and if the little girls *have* a rag upon them, they coquettishly cover their *faces* with it. The peasant's utmost exertions scarcely suffice to earn two-pence a day; and even this pittance is often wrung from him for the Pasha, when some neighbour has failed in the taxes, for which the community is answerable. Yet happy does he consider himself, if allowed even thus to struggle on through life. The bright sun shines, and the cool river flows for him, however deep his poverty; and the faint shadow of freedom that he then enjoys gives energy to his labour. But the Pasha must have workmen for his factories, and labourers for his crops. Conscription, for these purposes, then seizes those whom that for war had spared; and the fellah is torn from his home, to work under the lash of a taskmaster, for the nominal wages of two-pence halfpenny a day. This is sometimes two years in arrear, and even then paid half in kind, at the Pasha's valuation of whatever he has least occasion for.

Such is the Egyptian peasant's lot, aggravated by privations that are incredible. If sick, he has no medicine or medical advice, and he dies; if starving, he must steal from his own crop, which

the Pasha has set his seal upon, and he suffers the bastinado. If a conscript for war, he is kept in camp until no longer fit for service: then thrown upon the world to beg and die.

This is a dreary picture, but it is too true; and yet, under all these miseries, even here the "human heart vindicates its strong right to be glad:" amongst the most wretched hovels, under the most abject appearance of misery, I thought I could observe about the same proportion of merriment and amusement, sorrow and indifference, as in joyous Italy, or in our own favoured islands. No people, when exiled, suffer more from the *mal du pays* than the Egyptian, though his attachment to the soil be simply feline: all the factitious luxuries of Europe cannot compensate to him for his own voluptuous climate, his loved river with its indolent flow, the whispers of the palm-forest, bending with his favourite fruit. The Pasha and the Sheikh may rob him to the uttermost; his sense of Destiny and unconsciousness of wrong will make him submit to tyranny and oppression without repining; — leave him but his liberty, such as it is and his sunny home, and he asks no more on this side of Paradise.

In no other people, perhaps, is their history so clearly legible as in the Egyptian character: his loyalty is slavishness; his courage is ferocity; his religion, superstition; his love, sensual; his ab-

stinence, pharisaical; his resignation, a dastard fatalism. Yet, let us rather — remembering his disadvantages — wonder that any virtues should survive their effects, than that vices should abound.

When young, the Egyptian is remarkably precocious in intellect, and learns with facility. As he grows up, his intelligence seems to be dulled or diminished; he has no genius for discovery, and, though apt in acquiring rudiments, he is incapable of generalising. He fills subordinate departments well, but appears incapable of taking or of keeping a lead.

The dress of the middle classes consists of a red cloth skull-cap, over which is wound a turban of green, or black, or white muslin, according to the station or the creed of the wearer. The first is only worn by descendants of the Prophet; the second by the Copts, or Egyptian Christians; the third is open to any who chooses to adopt it. A chemise of cotton is covered by a silk waistcoat, and very loose cotton drawers; over this is worn a loose robe of striped silk, with wide sleeves, confined round the body by a rich silken scarf, and over all is generally worn another loose robe of cloth, or darker coloured silk. A pair of yellow slippers is worn within another pair of a red colour, which they put off on entering a mosque or private dwelling.

The Mahommedan faith is strictly Unitarian: the

Prophet is only prayed to as an intercessor. The religious Moslem performs his devotions five times a day, and sometimes twice in the night besides; he is strictly observant of numerous and trying fasts; he distributes alms in large proportion to his means; every act of his life is prefaced by a prayer, and yet he trusts to God's mercy alone for his hopes of heaven. He is ever conscious of the invisible and future world, and takes pride in acts of devotion that seem to him a vindication of his claims to a connexion with that world. For this reason he despises the Protestant, whom he calls the "prayerless;" as he looks down on the Roman Catholic and the Greek as idolaters, on account of their processions, and their worship of saints and images.

Unfortunately, this familiarity with the name of the Deity leads to its introduction on the most irrelevant and irreverent subjects; and he often prefaces with "Please God," or "God prosper me," an observation that the "prayerless" Protestant would blush to listen to.

The resignation of the Islamite is the most respectable part of his religion; the most sudden and bitter misfortune is received as sent from God, and to be borne with humble patience. Death itself, cowardly as he seems in other respects, is encountered and undergone by the Moslem with dignity and fortitude: in setting out to travel, he is more

anxious to provide himself with a shroud, than any other "change" of linen: if he is ill by the wayside, the caravan, which waits for none, moves on, and his death is inevitable; the sufferer then performs "the ablution" with sand, clothes himself with his shroud, and exercises his remaining strength in scraping a grave, with a heap of sand on the windy side. Then, trusting to the desert blast to cover him, he quietly lies down to die, with a parting prayer that his lonely grave may not be forgotten by the Resurrection Angel at the last day.*

The Moslem of the cities, also, when his last hour is come, turns himself in the direction of Mecca, and dies with as much resignation as if he did it on purpose; then his family raise cries of lamentation, such as "Oh, my camel!" "Oh, my lion!" "Oh, my only one!" These ejaculations become more striking as they proceed: "Oh, my buffalo!" does not sound pathetic, though it means simply that the dead was their support; and "Oh, my jackass!" sounds ambiguous, until the addition of "bearer of my burdens" turns it into eloquence.** The wailing-women and the grave-men now arrive, and, laid upon a bier, he is carried, all coffinless, to his last resting-place,

* The angel Gabriel is the minister of divine vengeance. Azräel receives the parting soul. Israfel sounds the judgment trumpet, and opens the grave.

** I have taken the greater part of these observations from Mr Lane's invaluable work — the highest authority.

and laid literally on the shelf, in the vault of his family.

In Paradise he finds the extreme of sensual enjoyment, as a reward for the mortification of the senses in this life; so that his self-denial on earth is only an enlargement of the heroic abstinence of an alderman from luncheon on the day of a city feast. His heavenly hareem consists of 300 houris, all perfect in loveliness. What chance has his poor wife of being required under such circumstances! — it is *supposed* she has a heaven of her own, in some place or other, but as to *her* substitute for Houris the Koran is discreetly silent. In Paradise is to be found every luxury of every appetite, with every concomitant, except satiety and indigestion.

I have dwelt thus long on the incidents and character of Egyptian life, as it concerns us not a little politically as well as otherwise. The relations of his country are becoming daily more involved with those of England, and it concerns us not a little how he lives, how he acts and feels towards his present government. See him reduced from man's proud estate — divested of all interest in the land which is but farmed by a foreign adventurer — excluded from all share in politics — without a ray of freedom to light him onward through thought to action. Within the precincts of his hareem alone he feels himself a man, and there all his thoughts and am-

bition dwell imprisoned: not daring to mount a horse, lest it should draw upon him the attention of the taxgatherer or his spies, the descendant of the desert chieftains betakes himself to a donkey, and goes forth to his counter, his only business; or squats in a gloomy coffee-house, his only place of public resort. There he sits and smokes with downcast eyes, unless the voice of the story-teller strikes upon some chord of fancy not yet quite numbed; and, in the adventures of his forefathers, he is roused to feel an interest that nothing in his own dull life can waken. Can this man's fate be worse—can any change bring additional suffering or humiliation upon this fallen race?

The Turks, or Osmanlis, are of small number, but high consideration in Egypt. They are to the Arabs what the Normans were to the Irish five hundred years ago—a proud, privileged class, without a sympathy for their vassals, except such as their religion may impose. They are, for the most, ignorant of Arabic, considering it derogatory to learn the language of a conquered race. Endowed with an instinct and power of command, in which the Egyptian is utterly deficient, they occupy all posts of trust throughout the Pasha's provinces. They are also less avaricious than the Egyptians who are placed in authority; and, though equally lax in their ideas of justice, they seldom exercise

the same grinding oppression that the Arab inflicts upon his fellowcountrymen when in his power.

The Turk is vain, ignorant, presumptuous, and authoritative (I speak of the governors and officers, who are the only Osmanlis of Egypt of whom I have had any experience); yet in society he is courteous, affable, and gentlemanlike. He never, or very rarely, intermarries with Egyptians; and, as it is a well-known fact that children born of other women in this country rapidly degenerate or die, there are few instances of indigenous Turks in Egypt.* Through the long reign of the Mamelukes, there was not one instance, I believe, of a son succeeding to his father's power and possessions. The Mamelukes were young Georgian or Circassian slaves, adopted by their owners, and adopting others in their turn; this Dynasty of Foundlings ruled for many years in the land of the Pharaohs, and is now extinct; some few survived the massacre under Mehemet Ali, but they have gradually died away. When I arrived, the last of them was to be seen at Alexandria, with snow-white beard and bended form, but an eye that, in extreme old age, retained all its youthful fire. This last of a persecuting and persecuted race is now at rest, with a turban carved in stone above his tomb.

* Mehemet Ali's large family would appear to be a remarkable exception. Ibrahim, however, is of European birth, and the others form slight exceptions to the rule of degeneracy.

CHAPTER VIII.

MAHOMET, AND HIS CREED.

While God was uttering through his lip, and writing with his pen,
Mahommed took his lot with us, a man with other men:
And thus, in our due love to him, and awe for God alone,
We bless his memory as the chest that holds the precious stone.

MILNES.

Imposteur à la Mecque, mais Prophète à Médine.

VOLTAIRE.

El Islam signifies "resignation," and is the Moslem expression for the Mahometan faith; the exposition of its principles could not have found one more appropriate. I am not about to enter upon any dry, theological discussions, but the whole character of Eastern life is so strongly impregnated by Islamism, that a glance at this faith and its extraordinary founder seems unavoidable.

The star-worship of old times was surely the most natural belief to which the wandering soul could cling. It first revealed itself in those unclouded climes where the host of Heaven is ever visible. The planets especially appeared to preside over Earth's fluctuating fates, and to each was allotted some peculiar ministry by this lofty superstition. The priests were also astrologers, and when their influence had passed away, the book in which they

read — its page the sky, its letters, stars — remained still open, and still devoutly gazed on. To this moment, an instinct of this faith lingers among the people of the desert, who attribute the rising of the Nile to one, the falling of the miraculous drop that cures the plague and blesses the year to another, star — their human destiny to the combination of the host of Heaven: and who can tell how often and how deeply the lonely wanderer has been cheered by the belief that these eyes of heaven were watching over his desert path!

Upon this star-worship was grafted a wild, vague mythology, that expressed itself in idols: this must have been a very complicated theology, for we find Mahomet, in one iconoclasm, destroying three hundred and sixty of its stony saints that had occupied the temple of the Caaba in peace till then.* This temple was in existence before the Christian era, and contained the black stone that fell from heaven, on which Jacob dreamed!

Scattered among the Sabeans were many Christians and Jews; the latter principally emigrants from Syria when under the scourge of Titus, the avenger; the former, the converts of the Jacobite and Nestorian bishops. The professors of these two creeds bore the name of "People of the Book," or of the

* Some say there were only two idols here, Abraham and Nimrod.

Bible; and, if the Christians were tolerated, the Jews were even cherished by the Arabs, who rejoiced to find in the story of the Hebrew patriarchs the ancient origin of the fathers of their nation. They respected Abraham as a just man, and one who dwelt in tents; but they adored Ishmael, whose mode of life they found had been their own.

Then came Mahomet. He was of the tribe of Koreish, and the family of Hashem, the most illustrious in Arabia — princes of Mecca, and hereditary guardians of the Caaba. It is curious that the controversial Christians — themselves the followers of poor fishermen, who were yet ambassadors of God — endeavoured to injure his cause by stating that he was of humble origin. Noble he was, and therefore less wonderful his rise; and his father Abdallah is said to have been so popular, that two hundred and three virgins expired of despair on the day of his nuptials with Amina, a daughter of the noble race of the Zahrites. Mahomet, the only issue of this marriage, at an early age found himself an orphan, and a ward of his avaricious uncles. The result of Arabian chancery would argue them to be a civilized people even then, for, on coming of age, he received five camels and a slave as his sole remnant of a noble inheritance. "In the lowly valley grow the mighty trees," says the Arab proverb, and in poverty grew strong that soul which was to

influence the world. He first tried his hand and head at trade, wherein he prospered, and then he married Cadijah, the wealthiest widow in Mecca.

He had now time to look round on mankind, and to study his fellow-countrymen. He found their prejudices and affections divided between the idolatrous faith of their forefathers, the doctrine of the Jews, so gratifying to their worldly pride, and the more spiritual creed of even the Arabian Christian, which invited to self-denial in the present, by the promise of a glorious future.

Mahomet took the iron, and brass, and gold of these respective systems, and fused them into a bronze image of himself. He asserted, and the Eastern world at length believed, that he alone could reconcile the discrepancies, fulfil all the requisitions, and unite the strength of the world's divided faith. The Arab wanted but a leader, Mahomet wanted but to lead; and his was the energetic, self-loyal, indomitable spirit that could do it effectually. For seven years he struggled through contempt, and jealousy, and danger, as resolutely as the swimmer, who knows that he must reach the shore — or die. His claim to divinity and his warlike spirit acted and reacted on each other: did his followers faint under the burning sunshine of the desert, "Hell is much hotter," was at once his sermon and his bulletin; did the threats and the

power of the unbelieving Koreishites induce even his devoted followers to remonstrate. "If they should place the sun on my right hand, and the moon upon my left, they should not divert me from my course," was the vaunt of one who felt himself superior to fate, or the maker of his own.

When his assassination was determined on at Mecca, and each of the tribes devoted a sword to share his blood, he retired to the desert with only one companion; yet was he then not less the Leader than when, in another emergency, he unrolled his turban as the banner for 10,000 men: — "We are but two," said Abubeker, the companion of his flight, as their pursuers were approaching; "We are three," said Mahomet, "for God is with us;" just then a pigeon nestled at the door of the cave in which they were concealed, and the pursuers passed on unsuspectingly.

It was not enough for Mahomet that he escaped on this occasion — he had the bold assurance to date the triumph of his mission from that day; and all over the East, "The Hegira," or *The Flight*, is the glorious epoch by which the Believer reckons time.

Medina received the Prophet as such, and is consecrated by his burial, as Mecca by his birth. Thenceforth he and his creed triumphed together; the head that would not be converted fell upon the

field of battle, and the curved sabre was the true effigy of the Crescent.

In the history of the world, there is no character that can bear comparison with that of Mahomet, for the daring and originality of his views (however they might have altered or expanded with success); or with the sustained and almost superhuman energy with which he carried out those views, in defiance, as it would seem, of God and man.

In two instances, especially, he displayed a reliance on himself or his destiny inconceivable to ordinary minds. It was not only in times of security that he preached his divine mission, and promised Paradise; but in the hour of battle, when all seemed lost, when death appeared inevitable, and the soldier's courage was of no more avail; then started forth the power and resources of the daring soul, and the impostor authoritatively called on God to send angels to assist him; and — strange to say, those angels came — they came in the shape of Hope to his friends, and Panic to his foes. The Prophet's life was saved, and his faith became immortal. Again, in the more trying hour of illness and decay, when the glow of battle and of bravery was over — the light of the past quenched in the darkening future — dissolution close at hand, and kindred and believers assembled round his carpet to see their Prophet die — he held out unfalteringly

for his divine mission; his last act was to dictate the substance of a recent revelation from his friend the angel Gabriel; his last word, "God! I come to thee!"

In the cavern near Mecca, where the pigeon had sheltered him from the Koreishites, he compiled that Koran, which displayed such wonderful knowledge of human nature, at least, of Eastern human nature. These revelations were written by his disciples on shoulderblades of mutton and on palm-leaves, and the chapters, both animal and vegetable, were placed indiscriminately in a chest, belonging to one of his wives. It was not until two years after the death of the Prophet that these writings were transcribed and collected into a volume by Abubeker, the successor of the inspired editor.

It is the fashion of the illuminated minds of the present day to find out wonders of eloquence, and novelty, and meaning, in what that dull race of men, our forefathers, found trite, bombastic, and obscure. The Koran is now eulogized by Europeans in terms that might make a Moslem jealous; yet I am free to confess that, having laboured through "its incoherent rhapsodies,"* from the chapter of the "Cow" to that of "Men," I can only marvel at the power of credulous fanaticism that could ever have distilled a faith, or even meaning, out of its fan-

* Gibbon.

tastic pages. Nevertheless, Mahometanism claims the first and highest place amongst uninspired religions. It proclaimed the Unity of God, and inculcated entire resignation to His will. In its passive quality, it was eminently the religion of endurance; in its active quality, it was, beyond all other, the religion of conquest. Intended as a menstruum in which all other faiths were to be fused, it endeavoured to conciliate the Jew by adopting the patriarchs; the Sabean, by admitting geni and starry intelligences: the corrupt Christianity, which it encountered, by asserting the divine mission of Christ — the existence of Purgatory — and of a Paraclete, which was Mahomet himself.

Mahometanism was the child of the sword, the soldier was the priest; its existence depended on its advancement: when it stood still, it languished. Strictly Eastern in the rites and the habit of thought that it prescribed, it never was adapted to advance amongst a northern people. Had Mahomet succeeded in conciliating the Jews, it might have materially altered the character of the East, by consolidating their strenuous character with that of the volatile Arab, and rendering uniform the Eastern faith. It is evident that his keen vision perceived this importance in the conversion of the Jews; and perhaps he was led towards their creed by his zeal for the unity of the Deity and his abhorrence of

idolatry. But the descendant of Ishmael (of whose pure blood the Koreish pride themselves in being) was never to coalesce with the children of the Promise: "thy hand against theirs," was not spoken in vain three thousand years before; and was fulfilled when the children of Abraham scornfully resisted, even to the death, amalgamation with the Ishmaelite. Had they done otherwise, in all human probability would Jerusalem have been restored, and the Hebrews become once more a nation: but a mightier hand pointed to a different issue; the same obstinacy that had rejected the Son of Heaven incurred the hatred of his foe; and the Jew is devoted by Mahomet to destruction in this world and damnation in the next.

But even the conversion of the Jews to Islamism would not have altered the relations of the Moslem with Christendom, or made any difference in the result of the battle of Tours. Spiritual warfare found no arena in the minds of the combatants: the fanaticism of the Koran never came into mental collision with the fierce faith that chivalry had evolved from the Gospel of Peace; and it would perhaps savour of bigotry to ascribe to Christianity, such as was then practised, the check that the Saracens experienced in Europe: but the firm, vehement will and iron vigour of the Norman must ever ultimately prevail over the wild enthusiasm and un-

connected activity of the Oriental. However strong in numbers, and powerful in resources, every expedition of the Saracen was a mere expansion of the foray of an Arab tribe: the Moor was, as he described himself, a thunderbolt of war, but the cloud that bore it must move on, or be dissolved. When the Moslem reached France on the south, and Hungary on the east, he encountered that stern northern race to whom the conquest of the world seems allotted. Baffled and thrown back on Barbary and the Bosphorus, the tide of Islam, that must ever either flow or ebb, had turned. From that hour it began to shrink, and is now rapidly subsiding into the narrow channel whence it overflowed.

Would that we could find a pure and uniform faith following upon its retiring tide, as the harvest pursues the receding Nile! But as yet there appears little probability of such a result; nevertheless, come what may, the opened eyes and expanded hearts of men will never more submit to the Moslems' creed, in whose path have followed, like its shadow, oppression, insecurity, poverty, and intolerance.

It is not, however, by conversion, that Islamism is on the decline: — "Moslem once, Moslem ever," is a proverb among the Greeks. His very being is identified with his faith; it is interwoven with every action of his life; it is the source of all his pride,

hope, and comfort. Among us, too generally, our religion "is of our life a thing apart:" with the Moslem it seems to be ever actualized.

Inquire of the historian, the traveller, or even of the missionary, what number of conversions have taken place among Mahometans — that the people on whose soul, from their very infancy, the faith of the Prophet and the scorn of Christianity seemed stamped indelibly, and they will answer — none: it is only with a failing population that this war-faith ever fails — *ubi solitudinem pacem.* Then comes the Greek, or the Roman Catholic, or the Jew, who multiply apace; and the same belief in destiny that once carried the Moslem over the world irresistibly now bids him submit passively to emigration or extinction.

The Egyptian Moslem presents all the evil results of his religion in a striking manner, with little admixture of its better qualities, except the resignation, hospitality and courteousness that it enjoins; to which must be added respect to grey hairs and filial reverence.

The number of Moslems in Egypt is about 1,750,000 (including Turks and Nubians). The Copts (to whom we now turn) are next in consideration.

The African church claims descent from St. Mark, as that of Rome from St. Peter. In such

state as Eutyches and Jacobus left her, she has maintained her integrity unimpaired through all the political vicissitudes that Egypt has undergone.

The Copts claim, and are generally admitted, to be descendants of the ancient Egyptians, and this claim seems substantiated by the strong likeness that the portraits on the ancient tombs bear to the Jacobite Egyptian of the present day. Nubia belonged to this profession until about the twelfth century, since when it has been Mahometan; and Abyssinia is therefore now isolated in its Christianity.

The church of Alexandria was not a little proud of giving a Patriarch, or rather a Metropolitan, to that remote region, and drew such glowing pictures of its illustrious suffragans, that Portugal sent a Jesuit mission to convert these prosperous and powerful heretics. After much controversy and bloodshed, however, Abyssinia shook off the Jesuits and their creed, and returned to the Coptic or Jacobite profession, to which they still adhere. There are about 150,000 persons of this faith in Egypt, so they would seem to have increased since the time in which Gibbon wrote of them; although it is said that considerable numbers annually become apostate to the Moslem creed, for the sake of marriage, or money, or both. These Copts differ from the rest of the population in the fashion of their dress, except that they affect dark colours in their

turbans and their robes. This gloomy garb suits their saturnine and melancholy countenances, in which the history of their persecuted race is legibly engraved.

The head of their church is called the patriarch of Alexandria. He is selected from amongst the monks of St. Anthony, who inhabit a convent in the Arabian desert, not far from the Red Sea. The convents are very numerous, and, except for the greater length and severity of their fasts, they differ little in their rules from those of the Roman Catholics. The priests are allowed to marry, however, though their brides must be virgins; and, if these should die, no second marriage is allowed to the widower. They reject the use of images in their churches, but are very proud of their pictures. These services are read in the obsolete Coptic language, which is seldom understood by the priests, and never by the people. The Sacrament is administered in both elements, and confession is encouraged, but not insisted on. Balanced thus nearly between the Latin and the Greek churches, they have also many observances that partake of the Mecca ritual. They retain their turbans, but take off their slippers on entering the house of prayer; they abstain from swine's flesh, and animals that have not been killed by the knife. The women pray in a different part of the church from the men.

Their ancient language has been supposed to be that which the gipsies now use; but Mr. Lieder, who has carefully studied both, informs me that Sanscrit is the only tongue to which the latter bears any analogy, and that the Coptic has no living relations.

The Copts have a very indifferent character, even in Egypt, where they are considered deceitful, sensual, and avaricious: nevertheless, they have been in all times extensively employed as scribes and accountants by the more ignorant Egyptian and Osmanli; and at present they fill most of the revenue departments in the Pasha's offices. They are very industrious, and exercise various trades according to their localities; in Cairo, they are generally jewellers and tailors; in the Fayoum, they make rose-water and other perfumes; at Siout, they occupy themselves in the manufacture of linen, and a certain inhuman process, which is said to be a monopoly of the priests.*

Such is the material upon which our Missionaries have to labour, for among the Moslems their efforts are admitted to be all but hopeless. Mr. Lieder and Mr. Kruse** have made persevering and

* Clot Bey, tom. i. p. 336.

** Mr. Kruse is now gone to reside in Upper Egypt, at Siout. There is a considerable Coptic population there, but a scene of sterner trial, in every point of view, can scarcely be imagined than this brave man has ventured upon.

exemplary efforts in their calling, and, as they have brought greater energies and abilities to the task than many other Missionaries, their labours have been proportionably more successful. The Coptic patriarch is on the best terms with Mr. Lieder, calls him his "father," allows and encourages the Coptic children to attend the Missionary schools, and sanctions the circulation of the Scriptures and Church of England tracts amongst his flock.

Mehemet Ali also encourages the Missionary schools, and has upwards of 200 of its scholars in his employment. There were about ninety boys at the school when I visited it; an ugly ophthalmic set they were, drest in blue shirts and red caps. But a far deeper interest than mere eye-sight could receive was excited by the contemplation of these poor children, bending with Arab eagerness over the books whence they were allowed to imbibe truth, for the first and, perhaps, for the last time, in their lives.

They acquire the first rudiments of knowledge, as also the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, by chanting in chorus, as in our infant schools.

At twelve o'clock, a bell rang, and all the little swarthy creatures, rushing out into the courtyard, ranged themselves on benches to receive their dinner from the charity of the Church Missionary Society. I wish the London sight-seers could look upon this

little congregation, educated, nourished, and reclaimed from misery and ignorance, by the active charity of those who, 3000 miles away, in their own happy and favoured land, acknowledge the claims of these poor brethren upon their sympathy and their assistance.*

These schools of Cairo afford altogether a very cheerful aspect to an English eye; and it is a gratifying duty to bear this impartial testimony to their utility and good conduct. Attached to the schools is a neat chapel, wherein the service of our church is performed. The congregation was very small, compared with the number of English at Cairo. The latter seem to succumb, for the most part, to the fatal influence of this voluptuous climate; and, with some admirable exceptions, do little credit to the proud character of their country.

I must not dismiss these sketches of Egyptian creeds without a word upon the subject of Magic, of which Egypt has been, in all ages, the reputed stronghold.

* I would beg to direct the attention of those who are interested in the welfare of these missions, to that excellent institution, the Medical Relief Mission, as established at Beyrout. There it has been productive of infinite good, and Cairo would appear to be a station especially adapted for its establishment, from the wide extent of physical suffering, the want of medical advice, and the excellent results of making a prejudiced people grateful, and inclined to look up to those who have the means of distributing more than mere physical solace.

The powers with which the early race of man was originally endowed are said never to have been wholly lost; they lingered for centuries under the tent of the Chaldean, and the caverns of Africa. The grandsons of Adam were skilled in sciences which the world has now only begun to regain a knowledge of;* and in the days when angels mingled their blood with that of earth, intellectual power gained a height to which it can never rise again. In the busy and distracting life consequent on the universal emigration from Babel, much of this knowledge was undoubtedly lost, as, being oral, it was the first to suffer from the confusion of tongues: but Astronomy still kept her watch on the starlit plains of Chaldea; Architecture wrought her wonders at Carli, Ipsamboul, and stupendous Thebes; and Magic still cherished his dark mysteries in the caverns of Dakke, Ekhmin, and Domdaniel.

The Egyptian priests are said to have long retained somewhat of the ancient superhuman knowledge; which, being purely traditional, was at any time liable to contract or expire under the jealous guardianship of some high priest, who wished to be the last of his power. In the mysteries of Isis, some of the great secrets were darkly shadowed forth; and enough remains on the hierophantic walls of

* See Gen. iv. 22; vi. 4.

her ancient temples, to prove how much we are plagiarists in what was vainly deemed quite new.

Moses was well skilled in magic, as in all other "learning of the Egyptians;" and when, by miracles, he came to prove his mission, Pharaoh sent to Dakke and Ekhmin for magicians to oppose him. Their power would seem to have been real, though—like that of Elymas in later times — serving only as a foil to the mightier works of the divine missionary. When the Israelites came out of Egypt, they were so imbued with magical practices that we find them forbidden upon pain of death: yet, four hundred years after, Saul found a witch at Endor, and books have been written upon Solomon's necromancies. The study of magic is still followed in Egypt, as it has always been; Caviglia told Lord Lindsay that he had pursued it to the bounds of what was lawful for man to know; and M. Preiss, an eminent antiquary, is said to be now deeply engaged in the same pursuit.

The are many professors of magic among the natives of Cairo, and these are not to be confounded with jugglers, of whom there are also considerable numbers. The most remarkable of the magicians is the Sheikh Abdel-Kader Maugrabee, who has been introduced to English notice by Lord Prudhoe, Mr. Salt, Mr. Lane, Lord Lindsay, and several other writers. None of these travellers were men likely

to lend themselves to a deception, yet they were all more or less convinced of the reality of this magician's pretensions. On my arrival in Cairo, I found some difficulty in inducing him to come to my hotel, as he had been recently kicked down stairs by a party of young Englishmen, for a failure in his performances. At length, through the kindness of our consul, I procured a visit from him one evening. He was rather a majestic-looking old man, though he required the imposing effect of his long grey beard and wide turban to counteract the disagreeable expression of his little twinkling eyes. I had a pipe and coffee served to him, and he discoursed without reserve upon the subject of his art, in which he offered to instruct me. After some time, a boy about twelve years old was brought in, and the performance began. He took the child's right hand in his, and described a square figure on its palm, on which he wrote some Arabic characters; while this was drying, he wrote upon a piece of paper an invocation to his familiar spirits, which he burnt with some frankincense in a brazier at his feet. For a moment, a cloud of fragrant smoke enveloped the wizard and the cowering child who sate before him, but it had entirely dissipated before the phantasms made their appearance. Then, taking the boy's hand in his, he poured some ink into the hollow of it, and began to mutter rapidly; his countenance assumed

an appearance of intense anxiety, and the perspiration stood upon his brow: occasionally, he ceased his incantations, to inquire if the boy saw anything; and, being answered in the negative, he went on more vehemently than before. Meanwhile, the little Arab gazed on the inky globule in his hand with an eager and fascinated look, and at length exclaimed. "I see them now!" Being asked what he saw, he described a man sweeping with a brush, soldiers, a camp, and, lastly, the Sultan. The magician desired him to call for flags, and he described several, of various colours, as coming at his call. When a red flag made its appearance, the magician said the charm was complete, and that we might call for whom we pleased. Sir Henry Hardinge was the first person asked for; and, after some seconds' delay, the boy exclaimed, "He is here!" He described him as a little man in a black dress, white cravat, and yellow (perhaps grey) hair. I asked if he had both *legs*. Alas! he declared he had only one. I then asked for Lord E—n. He described him as a very fine, *long* man, with green glass over his eyes, dressed in black, and always bending forward. I then asked for Lablache, who appeared as a little young man, with a straw hat: the Venus de Medici represented herself as a young lady, with a bonnet and green veil; and the boy was turned out.

We then got an intelligent little negro slave be-

longing to the house. The magician did not seem to like him much, but went through all the former proceedings over again; during which, the actors formed a very picturesque group; the anxious magician, with his long, yellow robes; the black child, with his red tarboosh, white tunic, glittering teeth, and bead-like eyes, gazing earnestly into his dark little hand. The dragoman held a candle, whose light shone vividly on the child, the old man, and his own fine figure; his black beard and moustache contrasting well with those of the hoary necromancer, as did his blue and crimson dress with the pale drapery of the other. Picturesqueness, however, was the only result. The boy insisted that he could see nothing; though his starting eye-balls showed how anxiously he strove to do so. The hour was too late for any other boys to be found, and so the *séance* broke up.

When he was gone, I asked my dragoman, Mahmoud (who had been dragoman to Lord Prudhoe during both his visits to Egypt), what he thought of the magician. He said he considered him rather a humbug than otherwise! but added that there certainly was *something in it*. He said, not only did Lord Prudhoe believe in the magic, but that Mrs. L—, a most enterprising traveller, whom he had once attended, had the ink put into her hand, and that she clearly saw the man with the brush, the

soldiers, and the camp, though she could see no more. He told me that the people of Cairo believed the Sheikh had made a league with the "genti a basso," and that he himself believed him to be anything but a santon. A friend of mine at Alexandria said he knew an Englishman who had learnt the art, and practised it with success; and a lady mentioned to me that a young female friend of hers had tried the experiment, and had been so much terrified by the first apparition, that she fainted, and could not be induced to try it again.

This singular imposture, after a long success, has now been fairly denounced by Mr. Lane, the sanction of whose name first gave it strength and interest.*

* See the "Englishwoman in Egypt."

CHAPTER IX.

LIFE UPON THE NILE — MEMPHIS.

Smooth went our boat along the summer seas,
Leaving — for so it seemed — a world behind,
Its cares, its sounds, its shadows; we reclined
Upon the sunny deck, heard but the breeze
That whispered through the palms, or idly played
With the lithe flag aloft — a forest scene
On either side drew its slope line of green,
And hung the water's edge with shade.
Above thy woods, Memphis, pyramids pale
Peered as we passed; and Nile's soft azure hue,
Gleaming 'mid the gray desert, me the view;
Where hung at intervals the scarce seen sail.
Oh! were this little boat to us the world,
As thus we wandered far from sounds of care,
Circled with friends and gentle maidens fair,
While southern airs the waving pennant curled,
How sweet were life's long voyage, till in peace
We gained that haven still, where all things cease!

BOWLES.

Reader! even *you* may some day be induced to change the feverish life of Europe, with all its perplexing enjoyments, its complicated luxuries, and its manifold cares — for the silence, simplicity, and freedom of a life on the desert and the river. Has society palled upon you? Have the week-day struggles of the world made you wish for some short sabbath of repose? Has our coarse climate chafed your lungs, and do they require the soo-

thing of balmily-breathing breezes? — Come away to the Nile! Has love or hate, or ambition, or any other ephemeral passion, ruffled up a storm in your butterboat of existence? Here you will find "that calm counsellor Egeria, whose name is Solitude."* Have the marvellous stories of the old world sunk into your soul, and do you seek for their realization? Or have mere curiosity and the spirit of unrest driven you forth to wander? — Come away to the Nile! Here are sunshines that are never clouded; and fragrant airs as gentle as a maiden's whisper, instead of northern gales that howl round you as if you were an old battlement. Here are nights all a-glow with stars, and a crescent moon, that seems bowing to you by courtesy, not bent double by rheumatism. Here is the highest species of monastic retirement: you stand apart from the world; you see its inhabitants so widely differing from yourself in their appearance, their habits, their hopes, and their fears, that you are enabled to look upon man in the abstract, and to study his phenomena comparatively without prejudice. As you recede from Europe further and further on, towards the silent regions of the Past, you live more and more in that Past: the river over which you glide — the desert, the forest, the very air you breathe — are calm; the temples in their awful solicitudes, the

* Sir Bulwer Lytton.

colossal statues, the tombs, with their guardian sphinxes, all are profoundly calm; and at length even your island restlessness softens down and merges into the universal peace around.

The sun was setting behind the Pyramids when I embarked; but night and day made little difference in this country, and the former is only associated with the idea of rest when it happens to be too dark to see. It was bright moonlight as I mustered our swarthy crew on the river's edge. Their countenances were full of hope and eagerness; and, when their inspection was concluded, each kissed my hand and placed it on his head, in sign of devotion and fidelity. Their dress was principally a pair of loose cotton drawers reaching to the knee, a long blue shirt, and the red cloth cap called a "tarboosh," which, on state occasions, is wound round with a white turban by the lower classes. The crew consisted of a rais, or captain, a pilot, and eight rowers, whom, with one exception, we found good-humoured, faithful, honest, and affectionate fellows. Two servants completed the equipment; one of whom, named Mahmoud, has the well-deserved character of being the best dragoman in Egypt.

Now the cable is loosed, a long towing-line is drawn along the shore by the sailors; the pilot

perches himself on the spar deck; the rais squats at the bow; and the Nile ripples round our prow, as we start on a two months' voyage, with as little ceremony as if only crossing the river in a ferry boat. Palms, palaces, and busy crowds, glide by; the river bends, and the wind becomes favourable, the sailors wade or swim on board, enormous sails fall from the long yards, like wide unfolding wings; the union-jack floats from the poop, and our private flag from the lofty spars; the pyramids of Gizeh on our right, the distant minarets of Cairo on our left, slowly recede; and the cool night-breezes follow us, laden with perfumes from Rhoda, and faint murmurs from the great city. The crew gather about the fire with "dark faces pale around that rosy flame;" and discuss, in a whisper, the appearance of the pale stranger, who reclines on a pile of Persian carpets as contentedly as if he had been born and bred under the shadow of the palm.

It was a lovely night, with just wind enough to bosom out our snowy sails that heaved as with a languid respiration; the moon shone forth in glory as if she were still the bright goddess of the land, and loved it well. No longer do the white-robed priests of Isis celebrate her mystic rites in solemn procession along these shadowy banks; no longer the Egyptian maidens move in choral dances through these darkling groves,, with lotus garlands on their

brow, and mirrors on their breasts, which flashed back the smile of the worshipped moon at every pant of those young bosoms, to typify that the heart within was all her own, and imaged but her deity. — There is no longer mystic pomp or midnight pageant in the land of Egypt; we may look in vain for venerable priest or vestal virgin now. Yet still does Isis seem to smile lovingly over her deserted shrines, and her pale light harmonizes well with the calm dwellings of the mighty Dead. These, with their pyramids, their palaces, their temples, and their tombs, are the real inhabitants of this dreamy land.

This sailing on the moon-lit Nile has an inexpressible charm: every sight is softened, every sound is musical, every air breathes balm. The pyramids, silvered by the moon, tower over the dark palms, and the broken ridges of the Arabian hills stand clearly out from the star-spangled sky. Distant lights, gleaming faintly among the scarce-seen minarets, mark the site of Cairo, whose voices come at intervals as faintly to the ear. Sometimes the scream of a startled pelican, or the gurgle of some huge fish as he wallows in the water, may disturb the silence for a moment, but the calm that follows is only the more profound.

All nature seems so tranced, and all the world wound in such a dream, that we can scarcely realize our own identity: hark to the jackal's cry among

the Moslem tombs! See where the swarthy pilot sits, statue-like, with his turban and flowing beard: those plains before us have been trod by Pharaohs; these waters have borne Cleopatra; yonder citadel was the home of Saladin! We need not sleep to dream.

The night is gone — gone like a passing shadow: the sun springs suddenly into the throne of purple and rose-coloured clouds that the misty morn has arrayed for him. There is scarcely a dawn: even now it was night — then day — suddenly as a cannon's flash.

Our boat lay moored to the bank. Mahmoud started to his feet, and shouted "Yallough!" like a trumpet. Till then the deck seemed vacant; but then up starts the crew, who sleep in grave-like apertures between the planks, wrapped in their white capotes — a shroud-like garment that gives to their apparitions a rather resurrection appearance. All nature seems to waken now; flocks of turtle-doves are rustling round the villages; dogs are barking the flocks to pasture, cocks are crowing, donkeys are braying, water-wheels are creaking, and the Moslems prostrate themselves in prayer; with forehead to the ground, or hands crossed upon their bosoms — their eyes motionless, and their lips quivering with the first chapter of the Koran.

For my own part, a plunge into the Nile con-

stitutes the principal part of a toilette in which razor or looking-glass are unknown. Re-dressed, re-turbaned, and re-seated on my carpet, Abdallah, with a graceful obeisance, presents a chibouque of fragrant Latakeea, as different from our coarse English tobacco as a pastile from burnt feathers; and Mahmoud offers a little cup of coffee's very essence. In the mean time, the crew are pitching the tent upon a little lawn beneath some palm-trees: for yonder forest shadows the ruins of Memphis, and the gardens wherein Moses used to wander with Pharaoh's daughter.

The tent is pitched, and in the East there is no such home as the tent supplies.

Make the divan — the carpets spread —
    The ready cushions pile:
Rest, weary heart! rest, weary head!
    From pain and pride awhile.
And all your happiest memories woo,
    And mingle with your dreams,
The yellow desert glimmering through
    The subtle veil of beams.

Then fold the tent — then on again;
    One spot of ashen black,
The only sign that there has lain
    The traveller's recent track;
And gladly forward, — safe to find
    At noon and eve a home,
Till we have left our tent behind
    The homeless ocean-foam.*

* Milnes.

In Syria the tent was my only home; but on the Nile we seldom used it, as we were generally sailing at night, and slept on board the boat. She was of the class called Kanjiah; about fifty feet long, with a mast amidships, and another at the bow, raking forward. From these masts sprang two spars of immense length, to which were bent lateen sails in proportion: these are very difficult to handle, especially in the gusty parts of the river, which the mountains overhang. The Arabs are miserable sailors and excellent swimmers, so that Europeans who are not predestinarians or amphibious should keep a good look-out. Close to the bows of the boat a complicated fireplace, with oven, &c., is *built* of brick and mortar; and on this, little charcoal fireplaces, like the holes in a bagatelle-table, are for ever sparkling under coffee, or kabobs, or some other Egyptian condiment. The crew sit two and two along the thauts, or sleep between them; and where these end there is a small carpeted space, generally covered with an awning. Then comes a little cabin, open in front, not unlike the boxes at Vauxhall Gardens. In this we dined, and kept our books and guns. Within was our sleeping apartment, with a berth on each side; and beyond this was a luggage-room, and one or two smaller apartments. Such was our river-home for two months, and a very comfortable one we found it, with a few trifling exceptions.

While I was at Memphis, the boat was unloaded and sunk, to clear her of rats, of which there was great slaughter. While this and other preparations were being made, I roamed over the country in search of antiquities and adventures.

I wandered towards the forest of palms that embosoms the lake of Acherusia, and the few traces that remain of the ancient city of the Pharaohs. The former — its gloomy waters shadowed by dark foliage, and broken only by a promontory black with blasted and gnarled stems — was a spot that Rembrandt would have loved to paint; with the vivid sunshine, here and there bursting through the gloom, like bars of burning gold. Nor would he have forgotten Charon, with his spectral passengers steering his demonship to that vast necropolis, whose tombs are pyramids. Some mounds among these forests are generally received as Memphis: the site of Vulcan's temple, and that where the bull Apis was kept, are supposed to be ascertained: Cambyses, the tauricide, however, coming so soon after Nebuchadnezzar; and the desert — the most resistless invader of all — have left little trouble to the tourist, little harvest for the antiquary. The only inhabitant I saw was Rhamses the Great, who lies upon his face in the mud with a benignant expression of countenance that has rather a ludicrous effect, considering his attitude. He is forty feet long, and,

with his wife and four sons, must have formed an imposing family-party in front of the Temple of Vulcan. The lady and young gentlemen have disappeared; let us hope they are gone to the Elysian fields, which ought to be somewhere in this neighbourhood; but, as is natural, they are much more difficult to find than the *other* place, which lies yonder — near enough!

The quick twilight was come and gone, as I wandered and wondered in this strange and lonely scene; the last rays of light fell upon the pyramid of Cheops, just visible through a vista of gigantic palm-trees, that opened from the lake of Acherusia, on the distant desert. I stole down to the water's edge, to get within gun-shot of some pelicans; but the solemn and thoughtful aspect of the scene converted my murderous intention into a fit of musing; and the old trees seemed mysteriously to whisper of the dread prophecy: — "The country shall be destitute of that whereof it was full, when I shall smite all them that dwell therein; and Noph shall be desolate."

The next day I was sitting at the door of my tent, towards sunset, enjoying, under the rose-colouring influence of the chibouque, the mood of mind that my situation naturally superinduced. At my feet flowed the Nile, reflecting the lofty spars of our gaily-painted boat; beyond the river was a narrow

strip of vegetation, some palm and acacia trees; then a tract of desert, bounded by the Arabian hills, all purple with the setting sunlight. Far away on the horizon, the minarets and citadel of Cairo were faintly sketched against the sky; around me lay fields of corn, beneath which Memphis, with all its wonders, lay buried; and farther on, a long succession of pyramids towered over the dark belt of forest that led along the river. Suddenly the sleeping sailors started to their feet; a shout was heard from the wood, and I saw my friend slowly emerging from its shade, accompanied by some India-bound friends of his, who were escorting him so far upon his desert way. We passed the evening together, and something more, for morning blushed at finding the party only then separating — our friends for India, we for Ethiopia — away!

It was just daylight on the 8th of February, when we really began our voyage; the capacious tent shrinks into a little bag; its furniture resumes its duties in the cabins of the boat: and then we are off.

Eight Arabs towed us along, for there was not a breath of wind: they went capering, singing, and laughing, as if labour was their sport: a red skull-cap, a loose blue shirt, and red slippers, were their

only dress. Sometimes the breeze would freshen suddenly, and the boat shoot a-head; then they swam on board, let fall the sails, and with tambourine and pipe struck up their everlasting song. Generally, however, in the day-time, they were towing from morning until sunset; the pilot squatted motionless on the poop; the rais reclining at the bow, now and then exchanging a joke with the two servants, who alone busied about, in the constant preparation of pipes, coffee, dinner, and other refreshment.

Keenly we enjoyed this, our first essay at Nile navigation. Reclined on cushions, under a thick awning that made twilight of the blazing sunshine; surrounded by the strange African scenery, every change of which had so much interest for us; our books and maps lay beside us, ever ready to explain or illustrate what we saw; and our guns, lying close at hand, were in at least as frequent exercise.

Along our left ran the chain of the Mokattam, or Arabian hills; now receding, now approaching to the river with an interval of level ground, varying from three to nine miles. This is, for the most part, desert, and utterly barren are those hills; but a rich green stripe of vegetation runs along the banks, parked off from the sandy track by groups, or forests of palm-trees. On the right is a wider tract of cultivation, millet, bearded wheat, lupines,

&c.; and this plain is bounded by the Lybian desert and its hills. The banks are enlivened by frequent villages, always sheltered by palm groves; and now and then, in some lonely spot, appear the ruins of some city of the olden time, or column skeletons of a temple; and, far as the eye can reach, pyramids peer at intervals over the sand-hill, or the forest.

The concentration of vitality along the Nile is very striking. In the desert there is no sign of life; along the river it seems to swarm under every aspect. The waters themselves are thronged by huge, strange-looking fishes; myriads of flies and gnats buzz in chorus to the ripple of the waters: on the bank innumerable lizards are glancing, snakes are twining, and countless insects of unimaginable forms are crawling. The rank vegetation teems with insects, and the low spits of sand, that run occasionally into the river, are all of a quiver with wild fowl: could one throw a net over

> "Those rich, restless wings that gleam
> Variously in the sun's bright beam,"

one would enclose a rare aviary; snow-white pelicans, purple Nile geese, herons, ibis, lapwings, and a crowd of nameless birds, seem masquerading there. The very air is darkened, and rustling with flocks of beautiful turtle doves, birds of paradise, hoopoes, and strange swallows; and, high over all, soar the eagle and the hawk on watch for the living, and the

vulture scenting for the dead. Flocks of sheep and goats are browsing about each village; troops of wild dogs prowling, camels stalking along the footpath, and buffaloes making their eternal rounds in the water-wheels that irrigate the land.

Amidst all this exuberance of life, man only languishes; yet the fecundity of the Egyptian is proverbial. Vainly do the fish prey on the insects, and the eagle and the hawk on the feathered tribes; they multiply notwithstanding; but man has *his* tyrant, whose influence is deadlier far; and 500,000 souls have withered from Egypt, within the last ten years, under the blight of conscription and oppression. It is not only the loss of men that is caused by enrolment, battle, and disease; but, when the Pasha's pressgangs are out recruiting, whole villages become deserted. The men fly to the deserts, to escape his odious service, and their wives and children dare not remain behind them, to meet the vengeance of the baffled pursuer. In the desert they perish by thousands; and when pursuit has passed by, and the man-catchers have returned to their camp, many a roof remains deserted, for those who made a home there lie with bleached bones upon the desert.

The dread of conscription is painfully illustrated in the number of maimed you meet everywhere. At least two-thirds of the male population of Egypt have deprived themselves of the right eye, or of the

fore-finger of the right hand. There are even professional persons who go about to poison the eye, which they do with verdigris, or sew it up altogether. Our equipment consisted of twelve men; of these only ten were liable to conscription, and seven of them were either one-eyed or fore-fingerless.

There is something very time-stealing in the pleasant monotony of Nile travel: evening comes on so softly, morning rises with such unvarying brightness; the occupations of each day are so similar, that days become weeks, and weeks months, almost imperceptibly. We rise early, for the sake of the cool: on emerging from our cabin, a cup of coffee and a pipe meet us on the threshold; we take our guns, and walk along the edge of the cultivated land, in pursuit of quail or red-legged partridge, or unknown birds, by whose death ornithology profits as little as our *cuisine.* Mahmoud, at the same time, (while the sailors are towing) pays a morning visit to the villages, in search of poultry, eggs, butter, and milk: sometimes we accompany him to explore; and sometimes visit a temple or a jungle with Abdallah. About nine, we take a breakfast that Ude might approve, for Mahmoud is a first-rate *artiste;* and then the unfailing pipe promotes thought, and conversation, and repose of mind and body; for the noonday sun is blazing fiercely, and the very Arabs move languidly along.

It is passing pleasant, with a pleasant companion (and such was my rare lot) to find one's-self, for the first and only time in life, in the enjoyment of perfect, unbroken, unreproachful leisure. The calm life we lead, the calm climate that we breathe, the absence of all disturbance, of anxiety, or care, or hope, or fear — all this presents such a contrast to the life we have left, and must soon return to, that we can scarcely believe in our own identity.

This sense of enjoyment, however, lasts only for a season, and we were long enough upon the Nile to wear it out; the instinct of action, the force of habit, and Northern restlessness soon returned. Long before our voyage was concluded, we pined for Europe and its working world, with all its wear and tear, and struggles and distractions.

At sunset, if there is no wind, we moor for the night alongside the bank, and then there is always time for a pleasant stroll by starlight, with good promise of adventure. Then coffee, pipes, books, and bed.

Thus we lived a pleasant week, and arrived at the prettiest city on the Nile, called Mineyeh, the abode of the good Ebn Khasid, whose history forms an interesting episode in Lord Lindsay's "Letters."

The next morning we reached the village and factory of Rhoda, where is a sugar plantation of the Pasha's. Its superintendent is an intelligent and

hospitable Irishman, a Mr. M'Pherson, who left the West Indies on the emancipation of the slaves, and who has been here ever since. The West Indian sugar-cane thrives here; its juice is expressed by two English steam-engines, and is refined afterwards by eggs alone — Islamism not allowing the use of blood. The consequence is that the sugar here is of a very coarse quality, and it is only by an exercise of despotism that it attains the price of four-pence a pound at the factory. This is one of the Pasha's monopolies; it occupies 300 labourers, who are all conscripts; they nominally receive a piastre a day (about two-pence half-penny) for their labour; but this is always a year in arrear, and, when paid, is paid half in kind.

Every boat ascending the Nile hoists the flag of the country to which its proprietor belongs. Besides this, each traveller, before leaving Cairo, adopts a private flag, and registers it at the hotels with his own name and that of his boat. Thus, every stranger, on arriving at Cairo, learns who is "up" the river, and for what flag to look.

I had been expecting for some days to meet an old friend; and hearing that there was an English flag at Siout, we pushed on day and night, stimulating our crew by bribes, till we arrived at its port — the little village of El Hamra.

We were disappointed in meeting our friend;

but, as our crew had stipulated to remain one day here to bake bread for the remainder of the voyage, we mounted donkeys, and, accompanied by Mahmoud and one of the crew carrying provisions, started for Siout.

This is the capital of "The Said," or Upper Egypt: it is approached from the river by a road that runs along a causeway, under an avenue of plane-trees, about a mile in length. The city itself possesses baths, bazaars, rope-walks, and a cotton-factory, a slave-market, and the best pipe-manufactory in the East; but, notwithstanding all these advantages, it is dirty, unpaved, and poverty-stricken. I visited the slave-market, where the proprietor at first refused me admittance, but I understood enough of Arabic manners by this time to pass him by unnoticed; whereupon he attended me very civilly over his establishment. A brace of pistols in one's girdle, and a kurbash, or hippopotamus-whip, in one's hand, does more in the East towards the promotion of courtesy, good-humour, and good-fellowship, than all the smiles and eloquence that ever were exerted. The slaves here looked miserable enough, just arrived from Darfûr, across the desert. The Jelab, or slave-merchant, had lost great numbers of them from hunger and fatigue, and said that those remaining would not repay him for his outlay.

Passing out of the city towards the mountains,

we met numbers of women-slaves, washing and filling water-jars in the canal. They wore as little covering as Eve, but the eye soon becomes accustomed to this; dark people never look naked, at least to white ones.

After an hour's ride, we arrived at the foot of the steep but terraced, calcareous hills, which formed a sort of vertical cemetery for the inhabitants of Lycopolis, the predecessor of Siout. Herein the piety of old dug tombs of the magnitude and fashion of temples: "For," said they, "those whom we bury now as mere men, when they are awakened, will be as gods, and must not be ashamed of the places wherein they have lain so long." Wolves would also appear to have feelings on the subject, for numerous mummies of these brutes have been found as carefully preserved as those of their worshippers.

Our donkeys clambered actively up the sides of the crumbling mountain, and at length we stood on a platform in front of the wonderful Stabl d'Antar, commanding a view of about a hundred miles of the valley of the Nile. A vast level panorama, bounded by the chains of the Arabian and Lybian hills, lay spread before us, diversified with every shade of green, and watered by the Nile, creeping like a silvery serpent through the green savannahs. This wide plain was intersected by numerous dykes, or canals, which regulate the inundation of the Nile;

and, as these are generally planted with trees, they help to give character to the somewhat monotonous landscape. Here and there, a few tents were pitched in a green meadow, in which horses grazed, but generally it was under agriculture of exuberant fertility; wheat, and flax, and Indian corn, with here and there a sugar-cane plantation, or a grove of acacias or palm-trees.

The sun was high and burning hot, without one cloud in all the sky, when we took refuge in the Stabl d'Antar. The portal of this splendid charnel-house is about thirty feet high, hewn out of the calcareous rock. The roof, here and there, displayed traces of beautiful designs, in blue and yellow that once was gold. Within this were lofty halls, and many chambers, with hieroglyphics, and some fine human figures on the walls. I do not attempt to describe these or any other antiquities at length, as those who visit them will consult higher authority: and those who only read of them would be fatigued by any dry detail. There are many tomb temples of large size cut into this mountain, but the smaller burying-places are so numerous that they present the appearance of a huge rabbit-warren.

I looked down from the habitations of the ancient dead, on the rich, luxuriant plains and swarming city of the living; there was no Cicerone on that lovely mountain to disturb reflection: perishable

flowers were blooming round me, fresh and perfect as when, three thousand years ago, they were gathered by those mummy hands as a wreath wherewith to adorn that mummy brow. Gossiping Arabs were irreveverently kicking the shins of the powerful dead, and probably there was no relationship between them to aggravate the indignity, though they occupied the same soil.

Who *were* these mighty dead, who have left such monuments behind them, to awe the thoughtful and puzzle the frivolous? Here is a tomb as large as the throne-room at St. James's, and once as elaborately adorned with carving and gilding, and delicate art: part of it is incomplete — the mark of the chisel and each line of work are still, as it were, freshly left. What then caused the sudden arrest of life and labour here? None can ever tell. One hour, a realm alive with strength and energy, and mighty projects such as the world has never conceived before or since: the next, and all seems changed. That mighty race is gone for ever, and another, heavy with the curse of their great patriarch, arises; crushed and degraded, tyrant after tyrant has trodden them down for two thousand years till now.

Now to the Nile again.

What a versatile power our mind possesses of adapting nature to its mood! It is not what a

country is, but what we are, that renders it rich in interest, or pregnant with enjoyment. Even in this monotonous life we lead upon the Nile (though the scenery, and even the events among which we live, are generally the repetition of the former days' experience), the fluctuating mind makes its own variety, and, to say truth, we are not a little indebted to the illusion. Even Egypt cannot furnish an inexhaustible supply of interesting objects; and although these are unique in their way, the traveller requires to have recourse to study or sheer exercise, if he would preserve his elasticity of mind. The same river is ever murmuring round us; each clay-built village, buried in its graceful grove of palms, appears but a recurrence of the last; the same range of the Arabian mountains, unvarying in form, runs along our left; here and there, the Lybian chain of hills advances and retires on our left, but it seems always the same hill or glen that lies before us; there are ever the same cloudless sky and delicious temperature (how welcome would be a storm!); the same gorgeous sunsets and nightly blue, starry with constellations by which Abraham steered his course from the land of Chaldea; day by day, and week by week, we are tranquilly floating by colossal temples, mountain pyramids, excavated hills, man-made rivers, and monk-made hermitages, in which a hyæna might feel lonely.

Now we glide under a cliff too steep for even the bold hermit to find footing; but a convent crowns it, and Cœnobites now conspire in the cause which the hermit worked out in solitude. Hark! a cry rises from the water, "Carità! per l'amor di Dio! Christiani! eliceson!" and half a dozen aquatic monks are begging alms round the boat as they swim. The Moslem crew show little disposition to befriend these beggars: our dragoman hands over some piastres, which we suspect are paras, with a very indifferent grace; and the floating friars return to their cliffs, on which, some weeks later, I fired at two crocodiles.

The first time a man fires at a crocodile is an epoch in his life. We had only now arrived in the waters where they abound, for it is a curious fact that none are ever seen below Mineyeh; though Herodotus speaks of them as fighting with the dolphins at the mouths of the Nile. A prize had been offered for the first man who detected a crocodile, and the crew had been for two days on the alert in search of them. Buoyed up with the expectation of such game, we had latterly reserved our fire for them exclusively; and the wild duck and turtle — nay, even the vulture and the eagle, had swept past, or soared above us in security.

At length, the cry of "Timseach, timseach!" was heard from half a dozen claimants of the proffered

prize, and half a dozen black fingers were eagerly pointed to a spit of sand, on which were strewn apparantly some logs of trees. It was a covey of crocodiles! Hastily and silently the boat was run in shore, and I anxiously clambered up the steep bank that commanded the gigantic game. My intended victims might have prided themselves on their superior nonchalance; and, indeed, as I approached them, there seemed to be a sneer on their ghastly mouths and winking eyes. Slowly they rose, one after the other, and waddled to the water, all but one — the most gallant or most gorged of the party. He lay still until I was within a hundred yards of him; then, slowly rising on his finlike legs, he lumbered towards the river, looking askance at me with an expression of countenance that seemed to say, "He can do me no harm; but we may as well have a swim." I took aim at the throat of the supercilious brute, and, as soon my hand steadied, the very pulsation of my finger pulled the trigger: forth flew the bullet; and my excited ear could catch the *thud* with which it plunged into the scaly leather of his neck: his waddle became a plunge, the waves closed over him, and the sun shone upon calm water as I reached the brink of the shore that was still indented by the waving of his gigantic tail. But there is blood upon the water, and he rises for a moment to the surface: "A hundred piastres for

the timseach!" shouted I, and half a dozen Arabs plunged into the stream. There! he rises again, and the Blacks dash at him as if he hadn't a tooth in his head — now he is gone, the waters close over him, and I never saw him since.

From that time we saw hundreds of crocodiles of all sizes, and fired shots enough at them for a Spanish revolution; but we never could get possession of any, even if we hit them, which to this day remains uncertain. I believe, most travellers, who are honest enough, will make nearly the same confession.

Crocodiles stuffed were often brought to us to buy; but the Arabs take a great deal of trouble to get them, making an ambush in the sands where they resort, and taking aim when within a few yards of their foe; for as such they regard these monsters, though they seldom suffer from them. Above the cataracts, a Greek officer in the Pasha's service told me they are very fierce, and the troops at Sennaar lost numbers of men by them and the hippopotamus, when bathing; but I heard of only one death occurring below the cataracts this year. This was of an old woman, who was drawing water near Keneh: a crocodile encircled her with his tail, brushed her into the water, and then, seizing her by the waist, held her under the water as long as she continued to move. When lifeless, he swam

with the corpse, across the river, to the opposite bank; and the villagers now assembled, saw him quietly feeding on their old friend, as an otter might upon a salmon. The Egyptian, who narrated this circumstance, told us with a grin that the woman was his grandmother; that he had shot the assassin three days afterwards, and sold him to an Englishman for seven and sixpence!

The king of the crocodiles is said to reside at Denderah, and the queen some forty miles higher up the river. This separation of the royal family does not appear to have any injurious effect on the interests of the rest of the grim community: there was scarcely a sunny bank between these regal residences, whereon a crowd of crocodiles was not to be seen, hatching eggs, or plots against passengers. The parent crocodile deposits her eggs, to the number of from 80 to 100, in the sand, which is a sort of foundling hospital for her race: even hens won't hatch in Egypt, so it could scarcely be expected that crocodiles would set the example. The sun, then, is the foster-mother, and the only watchers by the egg-shell cradle are the fishes and the birds of prey. Imagine a nest of crocodile-eggs, when the embryos feel that it is time to make a start of it, and roll about the shells, attempting to emancipate themselves. Out they come, and make a rush for the river; a flock of hawks and kites is on the

wing for them, the ichneumons run at them, fishes gape for them; yet enough escape to make one rather squeamish about bathing in the neighbourhood, until all-powerful habit reconciles one to their society.

In the month of March the north wind is rare, and the principal progress made up the river is by towing. As the Arabs cannot walk with such a drawback more than two miles an hour, the traveller has abundant opportunities for pedestrian excursions. The corn-fields afford a fair quantity of red-legged partridges and abundance of quails towards the end of March. About the gloaming of the evening, you occasionally, but rarely, get a shot at a jackall or hyæna; and in Nubia your hopes are excited by tales of gazelles, and even of lions.

At one time we took to fishing; and though we had only twine and crooked pins for tackle, we met with the most signal success. It is true, the fish were strange and hideous to the eye, and detestable to the palate; but it was gratifying to our vanity to circumvent fish that were once deified by the men who built Thebes.

Our botanical researches were very limited, not only by our want of science, but of subjects. There may have been a great variety of weeds; but, as children only open a book for pictures, we only sought for flowers, and these were very few and far

between. The cotton-flower, for the sake of its novelty; the meadow-saffron, the convolvulus, the buttercup, and the orchis, for the sake of home, were often pressed into our service, and adorned our breakfast-table.

We are now in Upper Egypt, the country of the Doumpalm, which resembles a gigantic gooseberry-bush, stuck over with dark green fans in full flirt, instead of leaves. It is very quaint, but not to be compared in beauty to the common palm, or date-tree.*

At each village where we halt for supplies, a little market is *improvised* round about us. The old men squat in a circle in the front places, smoking their pipes, and discussing us as coolly and gravely

* This noble tree is indigenous in Egypt, and seems at home in the desert. Its tall, straight trunk and luxuriant head must have given the idea to the early architect of the column and the capital, long before the acanthus, clustering round the block of marble, taught the Greek. Its produce, when cultivated, is very great, and forms the staple article of food to the poor Egyptians. Every palm in the country is registered, and pays a tax of from twopence to fourpence each. The fruit is not the only useful part, however: of its fibres, ropes are manufactured: of its leaves, baskets; of its lighter wood, hencoops and light bedsteads; of its timber, with the addition of some mud, houses and boats; and even the kernels of its fruit are bruised for the food of camels.

The forests that it forms are very picturesque, though solemn, from the deep shadow that its foliage casts over the arcades of columnar trunks. It harmonizes beautifully with the ruins of the tombs and temples; but, most of all, it appears to advantage when standing alone in the desert, waving aloft its verdant plume, "the banner of the climate."

as if we were mere abstractions. The men offer spears, or crocodiles, or antiquities, for sale; the women, butter, eggs, milk, and poultry — the latter cost about two-pence each; eggs about three-pence a hundred; butter, seven-pence a pound; a sheep costs about four and sixpence.

On arriving at Keneh, we gave the crew a feast, consisting of an old ram, which was preferred to younger mutton, because it "stood more chewing." The creature was alive, killed, skinned, cut up, boiled, and devoured, within an hour: his very eyes, feet, intestines, and, I do believe his horns were swallowed; nothing remained but his skin. Even this, in the first moment of digestive leisure, was stretched, while warm, over the drum — dried almost immediately by the hot sun; and in the dance and song which followed, it actually contributed to the festivities consequent upon its proprietor's devourment, and, like Zitzka's skin, was beaten with thrilling associations of its owner.

Sometimes we met a raft, formed of earthen vessels manufactured at Keneh, and tied together on a slight raft of palm wood; mugs, jugs, pitchers, and pipkins, formed into a floating island, on which lived its navigators with their wives and children; sometimes a number of bees taking a cruize for change of air and flowery pasture. The Egyptians are very curious in honey; and they say that the

greater the variety the bee feeds on, the better is his produce; therefore, they take their hives up and down the river: true to the nomade instinct of their ancestors, the locality is as much a matter of indifference to them as to their murmuring flocks. The instinct with which the bee finds his way back to the boat, floated perhaps miles away since his last excursion, would argue the possession of some extra sense.

Sometimes, again, we met a boat crowded with slaves from Abyssinia and Darfûr, on their way to the man-markets at Siout and Cairo: numbers, both boys and girls, are said to drown themselves on every passage, to avoid the brutality of their owners: once arrived at their place of destination and sold, however, their lot is happier, as I have before observed, or rather "less wretched" than that of the free Egyptian. While our boat passed by with song and music, as if its progress were all one festival, these poor exiled creatures would turn round to gaze after us, and grin till their faces seemed all teeth.

When we anchored for the night near a town, the Turkish governor generally came on board to visit us, accompanied by his janissary and pipe-bearer. We rose as he entered, and made room for him on the divan; then he would lay his hand on his heart, and pray that peace might be upon us;

the pipe from our lips was then passed to his, of which he took one whiff; then he returned it with a salute, and his own pipe was furnished by a submissive slave. There was little variety in the conversation: "English very good; very fond of travelling; know great deal; have very good brandy." This last hint was always complied with, Mahmoud assuring the scrupulous Turk that it was made of roses, or of anything else, not spirituous, that occurred to him. Sometimes, the curtain of the cabin was to be drawn before he would taste the forbidden draught; and sometimes he carried off the bottle bodily, "for a daughter or a friend who was sick."

There is no denying their taste for brandy, and their passion for maraschino; but we invariably found these authorities extremely courteous, complimentary, and willing to oblige us.

CHAPTER X.

THE NILE UP TO THE FIRST CATARACT.

Emblem art thou of Time, memorial Stream!
Which in ten thousand fancies, being here,
We waste, or use, or fashion, as we deem;
But, if its backward voice comes ever near,
As thine beside the ruins, how doth it seem
Solemn and stern, sepulchral and severe!

SIR J. HANMER.

In a constant yet varying succession of such scenes, we advance hourly toward the south. Brighter suns, and starrier skies, and stranger scenery — wilder, lonelier — more silent — receive us: — sometimes we travel for hours and even days through the desert, where nothing but a narrow band of green, that feeds itself from the river exhalations, is visible besides. Then we enter tracts of richly green meadows, flushed with flowers, or wide fields of the blossoming bean that fill the air with their delicious and delicate perfume. Here are gardens of cucumbers, fenced round with twigs and stalks of Indian corn; there, fields of the Indian corn itself, a very forest of yellow grain; there, there are little farms of lupines, millet, and sweet pea; banks, gold-speckled with melons; and, haply, a crocodile or

two basking beneath them on the sands, like dragons guarding the golden fruit of the Hesperides.

All this produce and luxuriance is pumped out from the Nile, whose scattered waters are returned with rich usury from the grateful soil that has so unexpectedly received them, in shape of every green thing that the heart of (Egyptian) man or beast can desire. At intervals, all along the river, are to be seen little bowers, or sheds, like those that shelter the swans' nests upon the Thames, and under these the Arab and the buffalo are ceaselessly employed in irrigating the land.

We passed an evening at Keneh, to collect some stores and write letters, before leaving the last African town that has any connexion with the world of Europe. A Greek merchant from Sennaar, seeing lights in our cabin, came on board to claim the hospitality of pipes and coffee. He spoke Italian very fluently, and gave us an animated and interesting account of his desert journeys, and his trade, which lay in ivory, precious stones, gums, slaves, and other tropical luxuries. He inveighed, with all the energy of an English radical, against the unjust and impolitic restrictions laid by Mehemet Ali on the slave trade. "Would you believe it," he exclaimed in a tone of the most virtuous indignation, "the Pasha has levied a tax of five dollars on each slave imported into Egypt! Why, Sir, it

amounts to a prohibition, and will be the ruin of the trade!"

Most of our crew were very lax in their religious observances, but some few were zealous in their devotion: we had been several days without touching land, and this evening Mohammed availed himself of being on *terra firma* at sunset. He had no carpet, poor fellow, to purify the ground, but he spread his capote, and knelt down with an abstraction and apparent devotion that would have become a purer faith: his hands were clasped on his bosom, and at every utterance of the Holy Name, he pressed his forehead to the ground. All this time, an ugly negro, named Asgalani, who was a free-thinker and a wit, was amusing the crew by endeavouring to "put him out;" and this scoffer was greatly cheered by the rest of the crew, as he skipped about him, squeaking like a monkey, barking like a dog, crowing like a cock, grinning in his face, and inquiring "how he was off for a Prophet?" This did not for a moment disturb the gravity of the worshipper; and, when he rose from his devotions, he went to his work with perfect good humour and disregard of the joker.

Our impatience to proceed became greater every day, until we should reach Thebes, but the evening fell dead calm, and we lay moored to the bank at

Keneh;* as the Arab sailors cannot or will not tow the boat at night. About midnight I was awakened by a faint ripple against the bank; then came a breeze, sighing through the rigging, which was immediately followed by poking Mahmoud on the ribs through the window. Up sprung that indefatigable dragoman. "Yallough!" shouted he, in a voice that made the crew spring from their dreams: "Yallough!" echoed they; the hawser was loosed, the sails were spread, and our little boat darted away over the star-spangled stream, tottering and bending under the pressure of the brisk breeze on her enormous sails. Soon the crew subsided into their respective holes; the men at the sheets affected some semblance of attention, but their sleep was only the more rigid; the faithful Bacheet, our pilot, alone watched through that night with me. I did not sleep, for some of the romance of youth came back upon my spirit, as we approached the mighty Thebes — unequalled amid all the world's wonders.

The first faint streak of morning reveals the vast propylæa of Carnak darkening over the bright horizon; now daylight shines on the precipitous mountains, perforated with the tombs of the kings, and

* Keneh is the port of the Nile in connexion with Cosseir, on the Red Sea. The desert-way between the two is only seventy miles in length, and offers serious rivalry to Suez as a candidate for railway or canal to connect the Indian trade with that of Europe. This is also one of the Mecca routes.

the sun's first ray awakens Memnon into sight, if no longer into sound: a cloud, rich as a prism with all the colours that ever glowed, hangs over the Arabian hills: and, when the sun shines over it, we are moored under the gigantic columns of Luxor, that fling their shadow over this Portsmouth of the Pharaohs. On these waters, the armaments of Sesostris once swarmed, and their anxious crews hurried, and strove, and thought that *their* present moment was the only critical point of all time. Now they lie mummied, monarch and minion; the manly bosoms that beat for glory, and the gentle hearts that beat for them alone — all lie now at peace, although the traveller from regions unknown to them may bear away their dusty effigies for northern eyes to stare at.

One glimpse at Luxor, one gallop over the plain of Carnak, and away! The wind is fair for the regions of the far south; the Mountains of the Moon lie before us, and we must reach our goal, wherever it may be, before the terrible khampseen comes on — before we pause to examine those marvellous revelations that have taken even our excited fancy by surprise — those marvels, the first of which is enough for a month's memory.

A favouring breeze soon bore us out of sight of Thebes, and we soon passed the governor of Upper Egypt on the river: he was sitting under a canopy

in a neat galley pulled by ten half-naked Arabs, an escort of four or five boats filled with officers and soldiers attending him. Strange is the power of discipline! these very soldiers, a few months ago, were peasants, shuddering at the name of conscription, and ready to resist it to the death. They had been caught, however, and sent, as usual, in chains to Cairo: there, under the lash of the drill serjeant, they had contracted such a taste for military service that they were now guarding the tyrant of their quondam friends, and enabling him to enforce the dreaded conscription among their fellow-countrymen.

We traversed a good deal of desert scenery, leaving Hermonthis on our right: and, towards evening of the second day after leaving Thebes, reached Esneh, the most picturesque and amusing city on the Upper Nile. Leaving the interior to be explored on our return, we pressed onwards with a favouring wind. The next day, the mountains on both sides of the river ran down in very picturesque disorder to the water's edge, then suddenly ceased, and for many miles the country on either side was level as the Delta, and the eye ached in search of horizons which the clearness of the atmosphere rendered so indefinitely distant.

This being an idle day among the crew, owing to the steady breeze that blew over the level country, some of the sailors recollected that they had

the ophthalmia, and came to beg me to cure it. Every Englishman is supposed to possess unbounded medical skill, besides a knowledge of where lies all that buried treasure for which we so often risk our lives in tombs and desert places.

Being determined to try my skill, I began with a fellow who had two eyes, knowing that, if I extinguished one it would be doing the proprietor a favour; (most of the party, as I have observed, possessing only one eye each — that is, our crew of twelve had only seventeen eyes among them). Into one of these seventeen, which was coated with a dull, gray film, I poured a solution of sulphate of zinc, that made him yell with agony; he ran dancing about the deck, amid the laughter of the crew, one of whom with great presence of mind, snatching up the reed-pipe, played an Egyptian jig, which redoubled the amusement of the by-sitters.

Notwithstanding this demonstration of suffering, another ophthalmist lay down immediately on the deck, opening his solitary eye for the burning drop. I applied a weaker solution in his instance; and this, as it gave the patient less pain, induced him to consider himself ill used.

Every morning and evening, for a week, I had half a score of anxious eyes gazing through their films at my prentice hand, as it applied the magic drop. Strange to say, it cured them — and that

effectually in most cases; and what is more remarkable, it did not blind any of them.

Thenceforward, my practice became widely extended; not only was I applied to if any of the crew got a kick on his shins, or a bruise, however slight, on his fingers; but wherever the boat touched the shore, the halt, and maimed, and blind, swarmed around me, and were only too happy to get a bit of sticking-plaster for a consumption, or a rhubarb pill for a broken limb.

We passed Edfou in the night, and awoke to the view of scenery altogether differing from that which had accompanied us so long. A low line of hills had started up from the level land, here and there pinnacled by a ruined tower, a sole survivor and testimony of cities, nameless now even to the imaginative antiquary. These hills open into glens, once gardens, perhaps, or populous thoroughfares; but now the lonely Arab goat-herd, or the wolf, is the only disturber of their silence. Not a village is in sight, but a belt of the richest vegetation borders the river; waving corn, some green, some golden; lupines in flower, beans, and other fragrant blossoms. This is bordered by a line of rushes, and then the desert spreads abroad its interminable tracts of low sandy undulations.

We are now approaching the utmost boundary of ancient Egypt, beyond which lay Æthiopia,

where Jupiter used to dine once a year, in a quiet way, with the religious fashionables of that respectable nation.

As we approach the ancient Syene, the hills grow loftier and darker. Palm groves again ornament the valleys, enormous masses of granite shoot up from the river, a pretty villa appears on the left, a ruined castle on the right, and we come into sight of the most romantic spot of Egypt, which seems, like an artful tragedy, to keep its best scene for its last.

Assouan, called in Coptic *Souan*, which means "an opening," stands at the entrance of the Valley of the Nile. Here the river, narrowed into a rocky channel, displays a sportiveness and activity elsewhere unknown to it, except among the cataracts. The island of Elephantina, very rich in broken ruins, divides the river opposite the town; shaded with palm-trees, and carpeted with gay weeds, it seems still to lay claim to its ancient epithet of the "Isle of Flowers." A grove of palms stands between the modern town and the river; and above and beyond this grove tower dark-red granite cliffs, crowned with ruins, that give it a very picturesque appearance. Beyond this lie traces of the ancient Syene; and, among the rocky eminences, the track of wheels still points out where ran the ancient streets. The denunciation of Ezekiel is indeed ful-

filled — "the tower of Syene has fallen from her pride of power;" and nothing can be imagined more utterly lonely than this deserted city. Not a sound was to be heard, except the roar of the cataract and (in faint contrast) the twitter of the solitary sparrow. *

Many Cufic inscriptions and some hieroglyphics are visible on these rock-ruins; and in the quarries the mark of the chisel is as fresh as if the workmen were at dinner round the corner there, whilst a huge obelisk stands out from its quarry ready for removal. There is a cemetery too, in the neighbourhood, which seems less lonely in its silence than the city to whose millions it once afforded their only real rest; and, that nothing might be wanted to the desolation of the scene, a vaguely-wailing wind came over the desert as we watched the sun go down, and seemed full at once of foreboding and of mournful memories.

Immediately on our landing, a crowd came down from the village to sell their little commodities, or to stare at the white strangers. Darker, but more regular features, and smooth, shining hair, bespoke a change of population. These are, for the most part, Nubians; but there is a considerable mixture

* Ornithologists assert that this hermit-bird is only to be found at Rome, Agrigentum, and some other place; but, if the only creature of his kind found in a place like this does not bear that name, he deserves it.

of the Saracenic and Bosniak blood, left here in garrison, three hundred and thirty years ago, by Sultan Selim.

A slave-caravan had just arrived from the interior; and we found numerous groups of slaves, apparently unguarded, strewn about among the palm-groves. Some of the old women were making bread of millet-flour on a smooth stone, but the greater part were either sleeping, or chatting under the shadow of their familiar palm.

We had now traversed Egypt in all its length (which includes its breadth), and had left only sufficient objects of interest unexplored to occupy the pauses in our homeward way. Standing on the borders of old Cush and Æthiopia, we now looked forward to penetrating the wilds of Africa, and prepared to plunge into the interior with as fresh a hope as when we entered Egypt: we then looked forward to reaching Dongola, or Sennaar, and, if possible, to penetrating into Abyssinia.

Apart from that difficulty which, in all cases, from women to new worlds, stimulates a sanguine spirit, there is something peculiarly inviting to adventure and interest in the character of Central Africa. The magnificence of tropical scenery, enhanced by its deep loneliness — the fierce character of its few inhabitants contrasted with the

simplicity of their lives; their primitive virtues, and their furious passions; their vehement faith in religion, whether it be the distorted form of Christianity that we find some following, or the dark superstitions by which others are enslaved; the magic, the spells, the incantations, and the *fetish*.

It was not our fate to accomplish this design of reaching Abyssinia, as our voyage found its limit at the Second Cataract; so I shall merely glance at those regions in imagination, and endeavour to convey some idea of the little that is known concerning them; then return to our Nubian voyage, and resign my claim on the reader's patience, until we reach the more stirring and interesting land of Syria.

The name of Africa is borrowed from a Punic word, which signifies "corn," and was applied by the Romans to those northern districts, now Tripoli and Tunis, which constituted their granary. Lybia seems borrowed from *leb*, in the Hebrew language "heat," and designated the region lying between the Great Syrtis and Egypt. Æthiopia appears to have been a vague term, applied to all the countries north of Assouan, within which, with the trifling exceptions of some brief military incursions, the Greek and Roman sway was limited. This wide region received its name from the colour of its in-

habitants, and means "the land of the sunburnt countenances."

The capital of the country was Meroë, or Napata, where Candace reigned: this last was the chief city of Lower Æthiopia, and was supposed to be identical with the modern Gibel el Birkel; but Mr. Hoskins places it one hundred miles lower down, at Old Dongolah.* This question is of comparatively little interest to the general reader; but the secluded and mysterious island of Meroë, with its magnificent necropolis of pyramids, must interest every thought that allows itself to wander into these regions or these subjects.

The island of Meroë is formed by the junction of the river Astaboras with the Nile, about five hundred and sixty miles beyond Assouan, between the fifth and sixth cataracts. The capital of the same name is now only discoverable by its cemetery, whose pyramids far exceed those of Egypt in number and architecture, though inferior in size. Mr. Hoskins describes a vast plain crowded with these wonderful edifices, of which he counted eight different *groups*, one of them containing twenty-five, one twenty-three, and one thirteen pyramids! Each pyramid has a portico, invariably facing towards the east; and the general finish and elaborate detail

* Æthiopia, p. 67.

of execution bear testimony to their architects having possessed a high degree of art.

Isis, Osiris, Horus, and Thoth, figure on the sculptures in bas-relief in the porticoes, and are represented as accurately, though with inferior skill, as those of Thebes. Here then, most probably, is the cradle of the arts, which, advancing through Egypt, at length stood triumphant on the Acropolis of Athens. The ancient capital to which this necropolis was attached, lies, in the shape of stone fragments and burnt bricks, strewn about the plain, prostrate as at Memphis.

Mention of this empire, remote as it is, recurs from time to time in the earliest records of the Scriptures; and its monuments bear their own annals, which date back to the most remote antiquity. For the latter, the reader must consult Mr. Hoskins's valuable work on Æthiopia; and, with respect to the former, I shall only allude to Shishak's expedition, assisted by the Æthiopians, against Jerusalem, in 971 B.C.;* that of Zerah, in 955 B.C.;** that of Tirhaka,*** in 750 B.C.; and to the mention in Acts vi. 33, of Candace's eunuch.

This last event is of considerable importance in a historical point of view, as it involves the practice of pilgrimage to Jerusalem in those days, the know-

* 2 Chronicles xii. 2, 3. ** Chap. xiv. 8-11.
*** 2 Kings xviii.

ledge of the Scriptures in that remote country, and the study of the Greek language, which had been introduced long before into Æthiopia by an enlightened king named Ergamenes.

Whether any tradition of the true God lingered until later days, it would be hard to say; but certain it is that Nubia universally received the Christian faith in the fourth century, and adhered to it until the twelfth. Then the climate proved too strong, or their faith too weak, and their religion too corrupt, to withstand Mahometanism: the Nubians adopted Islamism to a man, and it is now their boast that not a Christian inhabitant exists between the Cataracts.

Beyond this country, the slave-hunters have a theory that there dwells a race of pagans and cannibals; this, however, may be merely a pretext to cover their atrocious pursuits; and certain it is that, though the Crescent now holds sway over the lower countries, the Cross resumes its power beyond, in Abyssinia. Here the faith which St. Mark preached in Alexandria was transplanted under the form of the Eutychian heresy, and here, with the exception of a brief Roman Catholic interlude, it has maintained its ground ever since.

They seemed to have profited little, however, in a spiritual point of view, by this deliverance. The light of Christianity glimmers very faintly at present

through the gloom of superstitions which have the shadows of African idolatry added to their own. St. Michael is appealed to as an intercessor, and the Virgin Mary is deified, almost to the exclusion of the Són. Confession is insisted on as indispensable to eternal life, and those who die unshrived are refused burial: the fee for confession is considerable, which may throw some light on this portion of the doctrine. Kissing the hand of a priest purifies from sin, and a pilgrimage to Jerusalem insures paradise to the pilgrim. The king of Thou, Shela Selassé, regards himself as the lineal descendant of Solomon by the Queen of Sheba; he calls himself "King of Israel," and bears upon his banners that inscription, "The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed." The Abyssinians observe the Jewish sabbath, circumcision, and many other rites of that people, whose cause they deem themselves destined to espouse, and believe that they shall one day rise *en masse* to deliver Palestine from the Infidel.

The Egyptians, proud of these converts of their faith (whose patriarch, or rather metropolitan, they appoint), used to exaggerate the power and resources of Abyssinia and its emperor; asserting that he could bring 100,000 men into the field, that he could withhold and give forth the waters of the Nile, and that he possessed unbounded command of gold. Modern discoveries, however, and Major Harris's recent visit,

reveal to us a people as savage, in almost every respect, as the nations that surround them.

There appears to be a wild caprice among the institutions, if such they may be called, of all these tropical nations. In a neighbouring state to that of Abyssinia, the king, when appointed to the regal dignity, retires into an island, and is never again visible to the eyes of men but once — when his ministers come to strangle him; for it may not be that the proud monarch of Behr should die a natural death. No men, with this fatal exception, are ever allowed even to set foot upon the island, which is guarded by a band of Amazons.

In another border country, called Habeesh, the monarch is dignified with the title of "Tiger." He was formerly Melek of Shendy, when it was invaded by Ismael Pasha, and was even then designated by this fierce cognomen. Ismael, Mehemet Ali's second son, advanced through Nubia, claiming tribute, and submission from all the tribes. Nemmir (which signifies Tiger), the King of Shendy, received him hospitably, as Mahmoud, our dragoman, informed us, and, when he was seated in his tent, waited on him to learn his pleasure. "My pleasure is," replied the invader, "that you forthwith furnish me with slaves, cattle, and money, to the value of 100,000 dollars." — "Pooh!" said Nemmir, "you jest; all my country could not produce what you require in one hundred

moons:" — the young Pasha, indignant at the tone or purport of the reply, struck the Tiger across the face with his pipe; — had he done so to his namesake of the jungle, the insult could not have roused fiercer feelings of revenge; but the human animal did not show his wrath at once. "It is well," he replied; "let the Pasha rest: *to-morrow he shall have nothing more to ask.*" The Egyptian, and the few Mameluke officers of his staff, were tranquilly smoking towards evening, entertained by some dancing-girls whom the Tiger had sent to amuse them, when they observed that a huge pile of dried stalks of Indian corn was rising rapidly round the tent. "What means this?" inquired Ismael, angrily; "am not I Pasha?" — "It is but forage for your highness's horses," replied the Nubian, "for, were your troops once arrived, the people would fear to approach the camp." Suddenly, the space is filled with smoke, the tent curtains shrivel up in flames, and the Pasha and his comrades find themselves encircled in what they well know is their funeral pyre. Vainly the invader implores mercy, and assures the Tiger of his warm regard for him and all his family; vainly he endeavours to break through the fiery fence that girds him round; a thousand spears bore him back into the flames, and the Tiger's triumphant yell and bitter mockery mingled with his dying screams.

The Egyptians perished to a man. Nemmir, crowned with savage glory, escaped up the country, and married the daughter of a king, who soon left him his successor, and the Tiger still defies the old Pasha's power. The latter, however, took a terrible revenge upon his people: he burnt all the inhabitants of the village nearest to the scene of his son's slaughter, and cut off the right hands of five hundred men besides. So much for Abyssinian war.

Its trade down the Nile is very trifling; the principal exports are indigo, ivory, hides, and slaves.

The Pasha has garrisons at Shendy, Dongola, Sennaar, and Khartoun, in Nubia. The latter owes its creation to his army. It is modern, of course, well built, and beautifully situated at the confluence of the Blue and White Rivers. A Greek merchant, who had been physician to the forces there, told me the Blue River was by far the most rapid, and also contained the sweetest water; which renders it proable that it retains purity and momentum from a mountain descent, which the White River is unconscious of.

Besides Meroë, there are magnificent ruins, and some pyramids at El Birkel, Solib, and Semneh, within twenty days' journey from Assouan.

After these slight prospective and retrospective digressions, I return to my tour.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CATARACT AND PHILŒ.

Syene's rocks are far behind,
  And thy green banks, sweet Isle of Flowers;
And thine, Shehayi! whose children's laugh
  Rings merrily through the date-tree bowers,
That erst, mysterious rites concealing,
O'ershadowed silent Pharaoh's kneeling.

LORD LINDSAY.

There! flames forth the sunshine of the Tropics, flashing over the roseate granite cliffs, and the dew-diamonded palms, and the silvery river: the very desert smiles beneath that magical morning power, and all who have survived the night come forth rejoicing, from hovel and from palace, as if life were indeed a blessing, as well as a probation. The indefatigable Mahmoud has already unloaded the boat, preparatory to the ascent of the cataract; and by his provident arrangement a file of camels is moving down the narrow pathway, to transport the cargo to Philœ, across the desert. Now the tent disappears, and leaves as little trace as the palaces that once occupied its site. Trunks, boxes, hen-coops, frying-pans, powder-magazines, and tables, are piled upon the kneeling camels. They growl a little to express those savage but servile feelings that pass for meek-

ness and resignation in the eyes of the world, owing to their hypocritically resigned expression of countenance. Now, the black driver gives an angry shriek at them, which means, "Get up, you brute;" and there they go, majestically towering along, as if they were doing it all for show; while cocks are crowing on the top of them from the hencoops, and Abdallah is grinning his teeth out, as he bestrides my saddle, surmounting a pile of kettles and coffee-pots.

The Rais of the Cataract and the other river authorities did not make their appearance till towards noon. A report had reached the Pasha's ears that the poor people, who dwell among these rocks, had discovered some means to avert starvation by catching fish in weirs of the rudest kind, built among the rapids. Mehemet Ali, by return of post (which fortunately for the fishermen occupied six weeks), transmitted an order to tax these litle fisheries; and the river-chiefs were at this moment occupied in an interview with the tax-gatherer.

At length they arrived; three tall, spare, elderly men, with long beards and large turbans, and such cumbrous drapery that exertion seemed impossible to them. They squatted round us on the deck, and were followed by crowds of their acquaintance, who listened to the bargain, and did not scruple to express their sentiments of satisfaction, or otherwise, on anything that was said. The bargaining was

carried on with vehement voices, amounting at important passages to screams, and the most violent gesticulation: we, of course, held our peace; and Mahmoud and the chiefs, after an hour's debate, came to agreement on a price, which each was perfectly well aware of from the beginning. This amounted to the imposing sum of £2 10s., in consideration of which we and our ship were to be dragged up the cataracts, and let safely down them on our return.

The wind was fair and strong. A new pilot, whom we were obliged to engage for the upper river, here took the place of our faithful Bacheet, as good a man in his way, black or Briton, as ever held a tiller. Our recruit called himself "The Hippopotamus," and a more grim, forbidding-looking negro I never beheld. His face was deeply marked with the smallpox, and frightfully seamed, moreover, with the explosion of gunpowder; he was about six feet and a half high, and his lean black limbs looked like those of a skeleton in mourning. Now, the moorings are loosed, the sails spread to the northern breeze, Egypt recedes, and we glide into Æthiopia!

Colossal masses of granite, detached from the dark red cliffs that tower over us, lie strewn along the banks, and in the river. On our right, Elephantina nods all its palm-trees in farewell; on the left, the deserted city, with its rugged ruins topping the

jagged cliffs; and soon the distance blended into one the vast distorted masses that lay darkly relieved against the pale blue sky.

Our voyage for the next hour was very exciting and picturesque; the river, narrowed between the dark crags, here and there boiled into milk-white foam: sometimes a pyramid of nature-piled rocks towered from the desert plain; and between it and the barren hills, would for a moment smile some spot of vivid verdure, shadowed by acacias, or a palm-tree; sometimes the sandy valleys were of deep yellow contrasted with the gloomy rocks whose shadow they received like water; sometimes these sandy tracts were silvery white, giving the impression of a snowy tract by moonlight. Soon we shot past the beautiful little island of Shehayl, and entered upon more troubled waters.

The breeze was fair and fresh, and our bark breasted the torrent gallantly, flinging the foam from her bows on the black rocks as she struggled past; at the foot of the second rapid there was a space of calm water over which she rushed as if to charge the fall, but it was too strong for her: for a moment she recoiled, then fairly went about and seemed driving furiously and inevitably against an impending cliff, at whose base the waters weltered fearfully. One of the chiefs of the cataract had, until now, been seated on the deck, tranquilly, but watching

with a vivid eye every motion of the admirably steered boat. Now came *his* time. In a moment more we should have been a wreck against that rugged rock, when suddenly he started to his feet; his cumbrous-looking drapery fell from around him like a veil: one instant, an infirm old man seemed cowering at our feet; the next, a stalwart, sinewy form rose like magic from his place: one moment he stood motionless at the bow, then plunged fearlessly into the torrent, emerged upon the threatening rock, and received upon his naked shoulder a blow that might have felled a palm-tree: the very boat reeled from her collision with that iron man, who turned her aside with dexterous strength, and then she floated round into a quiet bay and was at rest. The hero of a moment ago again looked like a bale of blue-and-white cotton lumbering the deck, except that he resumed his unextinguished pipe.

This was our first day's work. Leaving our boat at the foot of the cataracts, we proceeded overland to Philœ, where our encampment awaited us. It was only about two miles distant, yet never in my life have I seen scenery so wildly strange as that through which we passed. The general effect was one of awful grandeur and sternest solitude; yet, among those menacing cliffs that tower over and around us in the most distorted forms, lay spots of the softest beauty and richest verdure. These

increased as we proceeded; and we entered a village of pretty cottages, overshadowed by palm-trees, that gave us the most agreeable surprise: they were as different from the squalid dwellings of Egypt as were their modest, yet unveiled women, from those of the Fellaheen.

Old women were sitting in the shade, occupied with some quiet labour; girls were employed amongst the enclosures; little children ran about us, with merry faces and laughing voices, begging us to buy their pebbles, or flowers, or bright green locusts. Some of the attitudes into which these little urchins threw themselves were very amusing; the boys, with one little foot advanced, and one hand upon the hip, looked about them haughtily and erect: the girls, with a timid air that struggled with their merry eyes, wore an appearance of unconscious modesty that veiled their nakedness better than all the silks of Hindostan.

Then we came to Birbé, a sort of river-port for the Upper Nile, and, passing through a gorge in the rocky mountain, came suddenly and unexceptedly in view of PHILŒ! the most unearthly, strange, wild, beautiful spot I ever beheld. No dreamer of the mystical old times, when beauty, knowledge, and power were realized on earth, ever pictured to himself a scene of wilder grandeur and more perfect loveliness. All that I had read, or heard, or

imagined of this wondrous scene, had left me unprepared for such a realization; and, if I add my own vain efforts at description to those that have preceded me, it is not in any hope of conveying a true impression to the reader. All round us towered up vast masses of gloomy rocks, piled one upon the other in the wildest confusion; some of them, as it were, skeletons of pyramids; others requiring only a few strokes of giant labour to form colossal statues that might have startled the Anakim. Here spreads a deep drift of silvery sand, fringed by rich verdure and purple blossoms; there a grove of palms, intermingled with the flowering acacia; and then, through vistas of craggy cliffs and plumy foliage, gleams a calm blue lake; with the Sacred Island in the midst, green to the water's edge, except where the walls of the old temple-city are reflected. Above those shrub-tangled and pillared banks were tall pyramids; columns airy, yet massive in their proportion; palms, and towers, and terraces. Beyond the island, the lake glimmers through the ruins, and the whole scene of peace and beauty is embosomed in a valley frowned over by a girdle of rugged mountains, all scathed, and dark, and desolate: withal, there was an air of repose, of awe, and perfect calm over the whole region round, that suited well with its character and with the solemn purposes to which it was once consecrated.

Our tent had been pitched upon the shores of the lake; the fire was blazing, the carpets were spread, and in a few minutes we were seated as tranquilly "at gaze" on the mystic island, as if we had been at home.

I wandered along the river for hours, by the light of a glorious moon, that shone as brightly over that island as when a thousand worshippers thronged those fanes to keep her festival: and then we read Isaiah's denunciations; and Ezekiel's prophecies found a voice, as they did a realization, among the desolations they had foretold.

Sunrise, the next morning, found us tramping through the heavy sands, to return to our boat which we had left below the Cataract. The strangely-tossed rocks bore some faint resemblance to those of Glengariff, in Ireland, but were all the colour of dried blood. Even at this early hour, the sun was intensely hot, and the rocks scorched our soles through thick shoes, yet little children were running about with bare feet.

We had time to smoke our pipes on board, and refresh ourselves with coffee, before the Rais of the Cataract made his appearance, accompanied by about fifty followers, all naked but for a napkin round their waists; fine, athletic, intelligent-looking fellows they were; though dark as midnight, except where their white cinctures and turbans relieved the

gloom: they all carried heavy clubs, however, which appeared to us an unnecessary part of their equipment, besides the knife, which every Nubian wears in a sheath strapped round his left arm, for want of a girdle, or any article of dress to stick it in.

An animated and angry discussion immediately ensued between the leaders and Mahmoud, while the rest, leaning upon their clubs, looked calmly on; now gazing pensively at the strange boat, now glancing inquiringly towards a gorge in the opposite end of the valley from that by which we had arrived. The cause of all this soon appeared: the Sheikh of a rival village arrived, attended by numerous followers also armed with clubs, and a stormy debate began between the contending parties, as to who was to have the dragging of us up the cataract.

Matters began to look serious; the women and children disappeared, reinforcements continued to pour in to both parties, and the controversy waxed fiercer than ever. At length, Mahmoud, who had been gesticulating and shouting more than any of them, swore in a solemn voice, by the Prophet's beard, that he would go to the governor, and left the boat apparently for the purpose. Now, this governor was a decrepid old Turk, who might perhaps have half a company of half starved Egyptian conscripts for his garrison; but, at the sound of his

awful name, there was suddenly a great calm among that stormy crowd, consisting of some two or three hundred athletic savages. "By Allah, no!" was heard from a dozen voices, and suddenly the black rocks and the white sands seemed to swallow our invaders. It appeared that these poor people were almost starved, the Pasha having wrung their last para, and almost their last date from them, and they had come to endeavour to obtain some of our purchase-money. This money, divided among the hundred who were to be thus employed, would leave only about three-pence for each man for each day's labour, even if the chiefs did not appropriate the lion's portion; for this pittance they strove as for an independence.

We now made sail to the northerly breeze, which fortunately is almost always blowing, and conveys to the burning tropics the coolness that our part of the world can spare so well. We had smooth water for some time, and the deck was crowded with our new subsidiaries, while the three chiefs sat close to our divan, and one of them in particular was shouting like the chorus of a brass band. I requested he would keep silence, and, in my ignorance of Arabic, applied to him a term which meant something like "Hold your jaw." He *was* silent, as if thunderstruck; then looked at me for a moment fixedly, and pointed to his grey beard.

I did not know how I had affronted him, but I felt I *had* done so, and I also felt the force of his appeal. I made a gesticulation of respect, and used some expression of apology, which he accepted with rather a lofty air, and said it was "taib," (very well).

In such interchange of civilities we arrived at the first rush of water that is called a cataract, and made fast to the rocks while preparations for the ascent were in progress. The scene was now very striking; enormous masses of dark rocks were hanging over, or lying round us in every direction; the foaming river roared and writhed through every fissure and ravine; innumerable dark, demonlike figures, like those in Der Freischütz, flitted about us in every direction, among the rocks, upon the sands, upon the very deck; now they plunge into the water, or shoot across the rapids on a log of wood; now a dozen woolly heads start up under our stern, shouting for "back-sheesh." Perfectly naked and amphibious, they seemed to have as little choice of element as so many seals; and what with their shouting, and splashing, and ubiquity, and vanishing, added to the thunders of the cataract which the echoes multiplied, and the bewilderment of the strange scene, and all its savages, it became almost impossible to resist joining the universal devilment that seemed going on all round.

At length, we proceeded to business. The chiefs had now ascended the rocks, and stood, with their long blue and white robes floating in the wind, giving directions to the eager and fluctuating crowd that swarmed around, and above, and below them. Now an *English* rope, kept for this purpose, was made fast to the mainmast; and about a hundred Nubians, some on the rocks, some in the stream, laying hold, we were dragged up the hill of water that formed fiercely round our boat, and deluged her with its spray. "Yallough! Wallah!" we are on the very ridge where the waters seem heaped up ere they plunge below, and our boat trembles like a pennon in the wind. "Yallough! Wallah!" once more, and we are over it. After a short rest, we moved on over a quiet space of water to the third and greatest fall, where the whole body of the Nile precipitates itself from between two towering cliffs, foaming and plashing, and, in short, cataracting very respectably.

Now every arm is nerved, and every eye is riveted on the Rais of the Cataracts, who stands on a pinnacle of the rock, waving his staff like the wand of an Enchanter who had invoked all that unearthly-looking crew to his assistance. He waited a moment for the wind, which now came rustling up the river, swaying his white beard and floating robes as it filled our straining sails. Then, over

the roar of the torrent and the shouting of a thousand men, his voice was heard — "Yallough!" he cried, and made a gesture as if he were going to do it all himself. The cry was answered by the dark crowd in a chorus of "Haylee sah!";* as they laid their brawny shoulders to the rope, and made a rush forward. In we plunged, half-buried in the cataract, but soon felt ourselves slowly ascending its steep, though every sight and sound were overwhelmed by the rush of waters that foamed and sparkled over and thundered round us. One minute — and another — of convulsive struggle and strained suspense, and there! — we are past the dreaded cataract, and floating calmly on the river, which is now smooth for two hundred miles.

We paused a little while to take in the crew, and get out the water; and then, with swelling sails, we glided through the portal of gloomy rocks that shuts in Æthiopia from the world. When we emerged from its shadows, the lovely lake and temple-crowned island of Philœ opened on our view. We anchored under a grove of palm-trees close to our encampment; and, leaving the servants and the crew to replace the cargo, we embarked in a sort of wooden tray for the island. Our guide and ferryman was Abou Zeb, a very handsome and intelligent lad of about sixteen, who is called the King of Philœ.

* God help!

This title is accompanied with no idea of derision, but bestowed by the simple people round with as much regard for his prerogative as if it were backed by the power of the Pharaohs. We were glad to find that his sable Majesty had no residence, nor permitted any, on the Sacred Island: though, soon after we landed, some girls swam over with coins, and beads, and other little commodities for sale. As they emerged from the lake, they merely wrung the water from their long black hair; the sun, and their soft, smooth skins soon evaporating the drops that lingered on their undulating forms. These girls wore no dress, except a narrow girdle of tasselled leather round their loins; and one or two had a slight veil, which hung from her head over the shoulders; this she wreathed into a most becoming turban before plunging into the water. Notwithstanding the simplicity (to say the least of it) of this attire, these Nubian maidens wore a natural and graceful modesty, that invested it only with associations of primitive purity and Eve-like innocence.

We landed at the small door, a sort of sallyport: and, ascending a dark and narrow staircase, found ourselves in front of a gigantic pyramidal portal, covered with hieroglyphics of colossal dimensions. This opened into a magnificent court of the Great Temple, on each side of which was ranged a noble façade of lofty columns, nearly perfect. The capitals

of each were of a different pattern, but all beautifully worked; and, when the varied and vivid painting (with which each stony boss and blossom of the chapitres, as well as each column's shaft, was once enriched) was entire, the effect of the whole must have been very gorgeous, however irreconcilable to our present taste. We passed from this court into a lesser one, whose lofty walls seemed to narrow upward towards the sky. This gloom, contrasted with the intense sunshine from which we passed, produced a striking effect, as we found ourselves surrounded by gigantic sculptures, whose mystic forms we could scarcely trace; thence into an adytum, covered with a ponderous roof, supported by enormous columns, encrusted with hieroglyphics. On some of these, the painting was very vivid. It would be vain to attempt to convey any impression by mere words of this wondrous labyrinth through which we wandered from darkened tombs to lofty terraces: from haunted chambers to wide courts, where Belshazzar and all his nobles might have feasted. Everywhere we found new subjects of interest, and each spot that we explored appeared to be the marvel of the whole. Imagine walls, whose height it wearies the eye to measure, all covered with gigantic hieroglyphics, whére gods and warriors seem to move self-supported between earth and sky; then, groves of columns, whose girth and height

would rival those of the most corpulent old oak trees, with capitals luxuriant as a cauliflower, and gleaming with bright enamel of every hue in heaven: every pillar and every wall so thickly covered with hieroglyphics, that they seem clothed with a petrified tapestry.

And then, from the terraces that extend over this assemblage of temples, what a view presents itself! Beneath, lies that verdant and flowery islet, strewn with marble wrought into every beautiful form known to ancient art; over that pile of prostrate pillars, a grove of palms is waving; from between the columns of yon small temple the acacia's foliage seems to gush, and its blossom stream. Round all the island, flows the clear, bright river; and opposite, lies the old Temple of Osiris, now called Pharaoh's Bed. Beyond the river are gleams of green, shooting across drifts of desert sands, palms, rocks, villages, and wastes; and, over all, darkly encircling this paradise, rises the rugged chain of the Hemaceuta, or Golden Mountains.

Apart from the Great Temple (or accumulation of temples, as it seems to be), there is a very beautiful lesser one, nearly perfect. Its dedication is uncertain; but localities like these acquire little interest from names of gods or demons once worshipped within their walls. The island at large was consecrated to the great triad, Osiris, Isis, and Horus;

but it is somewhat disappointing to find that none of its edifices arose until comparatively yesterday— two thousand years ago.

The whole island is not above fifty acres in size, but it is richer perhaps in objects of interest than any spot of similar extent in the world. Here the student might live for years, finding each day some new source of interest, yet the antiquities of the island unexhausted until he became one himself.

CHAPTER XII.

NUBIA.

Where rippling wave, and dashing oar,
  That midnight chant attend;
Or whispering palm-leaves, from the shore,
  With midnight silence blend.

KEBLE.

Light was her form, and darkly delicate
That brow, whereon her native sun had sate,
But had not marred.

BYRON.

The evening breeze found us ready to start with its first breath for Wady Halfa; and as our boat shot away from beautiful Philœ, the dark precipitous cliffs closed gradually round us, and the Sacred Island remained but as a vision. If the days of hermitage were ever to return, the Solitary could find no place on earth like this, wherein to cultivate self-discipline, or study uninterruptedly, and, whilst preparing for his translation to another world, to communicate his own high hope of immortality to the gentle and intelligent savages that surrounded him.

Nubia differs very widely in the character of its scenery from the land we have just left. It is true, we had still the palm, the river, and the desert, like those we left behind us, but there are no more

forests; the cliffs, dark red, assume wilder forms, and approach nearer to the river; the stream itself is narrower and more rapid; the line of vegetation is more limited, but brighter, and the desert appears more frequently. The inhabitants, also, exhibit a striking change, becoming more savage as their scenery becomes wilder, and darker in complexion as the sun increases in intensity. They are a very mixed race, even between the Cataracts; and the people bordering on Egypt speak one dialect called *Kenooz*, while those above Kalabshé speak another, called *Kenzee*. There are, moreover, several distinct tribes, such as the Ababdé, the Moggrebyns, and the Bisharein, who have each their settlements, dialects, and peculiar customs.

Generally speaking, the men have laid aside the turban, and rely upon the covering which nature has supplied, in the shape of profuse and thickly-matted hair, falling down on either side of the face, and plentifully impregnated with castor-oil. Few of the young men wear any covering but a napkin round their loins, and none of the virgins have any garments, except the leather girdle I have before alluded to, and a blue or white scarf, which hangs down from the back of their heads. The matrons wear a single garment, consisting of a long and very loose blue robe; and the old men use turbans, and voluminous cotton robes, like those of

Egypt. Every man we meet with now carries a long spear, ornamented with the skin of serpents or crocodiles, or a heavy club of ebony, which is brought from the interior by the slave-dealers. Many of them also carry a circular shield of hippopotamus' hide, with a boss in the centre, forming a hollow for the hand, which grasps an iron bar.

Great numbers of Nubians, oppressed by hard labour and heavy taxes, leave their country to seek subsistence as servants at Cairo, where they are in great request from their character for honesty and courage. In this particular they resemble the Swiss in Paris; and like them, only strive to amass wealth, in the hope of enjoying it in their own country during the evening of their lives.

The Egyptians call their language, or languages, Barabra, and themselves Berberi; and this is probably a modification of the term Barbari, which the Greeks and Romans applied to all foreigners indiscriminately. As a nation, they appear industrious, simple, and much given to war, at least in the shape of intestine feuds. Their principal vice appears to be drunkenness; but I must say that I have this only from hearsay, as I never saw an instance of intoxication, except in our Nubian pilot, who deeply expiated his offence. Their dram is distilled from rice, and called *Raki;* but they have

also a very tempting liquor called *Boozy*, distilled from barley.

The Nubian woman is more free than her Egyptian neighbour, and also far more virtuous; she seldom wears a veil, and, as she bends over the river to fill her water-jar, or walks away, supporting it with one hand, no statuary could imagine a more graceful picture than she presents. Her light and elegant figure has that serpent sinuousness, when she moves, that constitutes the very poetry of motion, and resembles gliding rather than walking. Her face is finely oval, and her dark eyes have a gentle and inquiring though somewhat sad expression, that seems to bespeak great intelligence. Her complexion is very dark, but it is of that bronze colour, so familiar to our eyes in statues, that it forms no detraction from the general beauty of this graceful and winning savage.

There was a girl at Philœ, who, I think, approached more nearly the *ideal* of perfect loveliness than any other I have ever seen, and might have passed for the very spirit of that wild and beautiful region. Whether she lay couched under the shade of the palms, weaving the cotton, whose pale yellow flowers were strewn around her, or led her sheep to pasture, or smiled upon the children at their play, or gazed upon the strangers with her large, lustrous,

gentle eyes — in every phase of her simple life, she was what Eve might well have been.

The voices of these women are very sweet, and low, and plaintive; and though their language conveyed to my ear as little meaning as the song of birds, yet there was something in its *tones* that seemed familiar. Often, when our boat lay moored under the shadow of the palm, have I lain and listened to the murmur of their voices with a pleasure such as the richest notes of the Italian music never thrilled me with. There is nothing so associative as sound: there are tones, which our heart in its youth has heard, that never leave it; that lie hushed from the wild tumult of the world we live in, until some sister-sound bids its association start to life, and with it recalls not only the time, but the feelings we enjoyed or suffered when first we heard its music. Under such a spell, the wild and savage scenery of Africa passed from before my eyes; far distant climes and times replaced it on Memory's mirage, and came thronging by as rapidly as those hours had fleeted, when I was roused from my reverie by Mahmoud's informing me, with an execration, that these "maladette donne" wanted three piastres a piece for their "maladetti pollastri."

Whilst advancing south, we are driving against the current at the rate of four or five miles an hour, with an indolent and luxurious sense of motion that

is the principal charm of our river navigation in this delicious climate. But, as the sun goes down behind the desert mountains, the breeze falls too; we are fain to anchor under a high bank till morning, and, wearied as we are with cataracts, and temples, and desert pedestrianism, we gladly prepare to rest. But, hark! as the moon rises over yon grove of palms, the sounds of song mingle with the faint rustle of their foliage, and our ears find something strangely attractive in this mysterious music, issuing from invisible lips in a land all strange to us. "C'è un *ballo!*" exclaimed Mahmoud, starting from his carpet where he had just composed himself to rest. "E un *gran* ballo!" repeated he, as he placed his hand to his ear to listen more attentively. "Andiamo, Signori," he continued, with an expression that seemed to say the expedition was inevitable; "Andiamo," echoed we, as we stuck pistols in our girdles, and flung our jackets over our shoulders.

And now behold us threading our way through a dark forest, attended by a volunteer escort of four of our crew armed with clubs. As we steered our way by the sound of the yet distant music, I inquired of Mahmoud if we should find our unconscious entertainers dancing. "Oh, yes." "What! the women dancing with the men?" "Corpo di Bacco! No; these women are all highly respectable."

"How do you know? you have never mixed in the gay world here." "All the Berberi women are respectable." "But," said I, "the most respectable women in my country dance as if it was a part of their duty." "Ah!" replied the Moslem, "son' Christiane, queste," and our conversation terminated with the forest.

From this we soon emerged upon a tract of snow-white sand, interspersed with dark and lofty piles of granite rock, shadowed here and there by some scattered palms.

In one of the vacant spaces sat a row of women in a semicircle, surrounded by a crowd of men, all standing, and listening attentively to the concert, which was entirely composed of female voices. The women are all singing very vehemently, accompanying themselves with tamborines, or marking the time by clapping their hands. The moon, brilliant as she was, could not light up their dark faces, and I could only see the gleaming of their eyes: some few coquettishly turned away their faces as we approached, but soon gave themselves up once more to their absorbing song. It was very wild; but the music was far sweeter and more varied than any I had yet heard in Africa, and there were passages in the ceaseless chant that I would fain have carried away in my memory.

At first, our appearance was unobserved, owing

to the shadow in which we stood, and the deep interest with which they listened; but, when we came forward, a mat was spread for us in front of the performers, some shots were fired in our honour, and all the elders of the village came up to salute us. I shook hands with half a dozen of the greasy savages, and made room upon my mat for him who appeared to be Sheikh. It was a very curious scene, that semicircle of dark women vehemently chanting their wild song, and the wall of fierce-looking figures that surrounded us; the bright moon, shining on the white sand, threw these figures into strong relief, while the shadow of a palm flickered and played about, like some huge spasmodic spider. The Sheikh, whose white beard flowed freely over his dusky bosom, sat by my side with an appearance of the most perfect nonchalance, as if we had the run of his house, and were in the *habit* of "looking in of an evening occasionally:" the gloomy-looking groups that surrounded us bristled with long spears that appeared to be part of their ball-dress.

After a short time, I distributed some small presents among the women, who received them in silence; and then the men began to gather round us, demanding money and other trifles in a tone that appeared by no means conciliatory, coming from the possessors of spear and shield. We had no choice but to resist at once, briefly and indignantly; where-

upon, an ill-looking ruffian, who very much resembled one of the jackall-headed deities or devils on the tombs at Thebes, demanded why, if we had no money to give them, we came there. "We have powder," said I, pointing to my pistol; and Mahmoud, starting up in great indignation, began a violent declamation on their want of courtesy and hospitality. The more decent part ot the community seemed to appreciate his eloquence, and respectfully retired to a little distance; but some of the spearmen gathered round us, and became the more clamorous. The women disappeared, and we found ourselves in no very pleasant predicament, standing in the midst of a couple of hundred angry savages, half a mile from our boat at midnight, in the depths of a Nubian forest.

"This comes of dissipation," observed R.; and the laugh that followed his remark probably stood us in better stead than even the dread of English fire-arms. I made a speech about strangers, Englishmen, Pashas, &c., which Mahmoud interpreted to the Sheikh: and we prepared to depart with very menacing gestures, as if we had some serious thoughts of sending the whole assembly in chains to Cairo. The crowd opened to let our little procession pass: our four sailors in advance; and I, who alone had pistols, in the rear. I paused a moment to shake hands with the decent old Sheikh; shook my fist at

the jackall-looking robber, and plunged into the wood with the rest of my party.

The last glimpse I caught of the assembly represented the dusky dandies in high debate, which they probably finished by a fight.

The next day we passed within the Tropics, and caught glimpses of some very picturesque glens opening into the desert, as we darted on before a spanking breeze. We came to an anchor in the evening at Kalabshé, a commanding-looking town, on the right bank of the river. Its inhabitants bear such a character for courage and determination that neither tax-gatherer nor conscript-catcher has ever ventured within its walls — a practical result of heroism that Jeremy Bentham himself might give them credit for.

As usual, a crowd gathered round our boat as soon as we arrived: they were all armed, but quiet, civil, and respectful. The young men stood apart, but the old men squatted themselves on the bank, and asked for news: the women brought milk, eggs, and poultry to dispose of, and the children produced coins and pebbles.

Leaving the antiquities to be explored on our return, we resumed our voyage.

No words can convey an idea of the beauty and delightfulness of tropical weather, at least while any breeze from the north is blowing. There is a plea-

sure in the very act of breathing — a voluptuous consciousness that existence is a blessed thing; the pulse beats high, but calmly; the eye feels expanded, the chest heaves pleasurably, as if air was a delicious draught to thirsty lungs, and the mind takes its colouring and character from sensation. No thought of melancholy ever darkens over us — no painful sense of isolation or of loneliness, as day after day we pass on through silent deserts, upon the silent and solemn river. One seems, as it were, removed into another state of existence; and all the strifes and struggles of that from which we have emerged seem to fade, softened into indistinctness. This is what Homer and Alfred Tennyson knew the lotos-eaters felt when they tasted of the mysterious tree of this country, and became weary of their wanderings: —

> "To him the gushing of the wave,
> Far, far away, did seem to mourn and rave
> On alien shores: and if his fellow spake,
> His voice was thin, as voices from the grave:
> And deep asleep he seemed, yet all awake,
> And music in his ears his beating heart did make."

If the day, with all the tyranny of its sunshine and its innumerable insects, be enjoyable in the Tropics, the night is still more so. The stars shine out with diamond brilliancy, and appear as large as if seen through a telescope. Their changing colours, the wake of light they cast upon the water, the

distinctness of the Milky Way, and the splendour, above all, of the evening star, give one the impression of being under a different firmament from that to which we have been accustomed; then, the cool, delicious airs of night, with all the strange and stilly sounds they bear from the desert and the forest; the delicate scents they scatter, and the languid breathings with which they make our large white sails appear to pant, as they flutter softly over the water.

Thus we ran along the river, day and night, for many a week. Sometimes the weather was so hot, that even our sunburnt sailors could move no longer with the towing rope: we thus lost many hours of noon in idleness, while the sun blazed fiercely on the red desert, that reflected back his rays with interest on the naked cliffs and on the flashing river. This was the real hour of repose; the silence was intense, and all nature seemed entranced; happy those who could sleep away that season of importunate sunshine! to read was impossible; languid thought refused to act, and would even dream no longer; the very mosquitos and gnats fell asleep or scorched; and there was nothing for it but pipes, sherbet, and resignation.

But when the sun begins to sink towards the west, where the clouds seem to grow red-hot at his touch, and glow like bars of iron in a furnace, then all nature, from the mountain-breezes to the

mosquitos, begins to revive. The sailors are in motion; the bull-frog raises his bellowing, the few solitary birds their song; the river finds its murmur, and we plunge into its waters, and then take a stroll upon the desert with our guns. As night comes on, the moonlight gives the reddish-coloured sands the appearance of a snow-covered world reflecting the glow of some distant conflagration. The sand-hills where we wander are sprinkled with stunted shrubs, on which the gazelle feeds, and among which the lion and the wolf lurk for these desert deer.

At some distance from the river I stood alone upon a naked mountain's side, and the prospect was the wildest, loneliest, and dreariest I had ever witnessed. Far and wide, to the horizon's edge, the trackless, monotonous desert spread its undulations like a sea: but without a shadow, or a fleck of foam, or a sail to enliven its dull, sulky-looking wastes. There was not even a tree to relieve the view, nor anything on which to rest the weary eye, but the river winding in blue or silver, as the moon or the shadow fell upon its waters; and on its surface far away floated one small speck, containing the only human hearts that beat within that wide-extended circle of blank desert and unclouded sky.

Sometimes we came to places where the river narrowed like the river Avon under Clifton Downs, and the sailors could often find no footing on the

crags; then they would swim in files, drawing the boat-rope in their teeth. After leaving such gorges and deserts, we opened upon a broad, calm river, and a country which appeared to smile with verdure in comparison to that which we had come from.

As the river broadened, there appeared an island that would have been beautiful anywhere, but here was like a glimpse of Paradise. Palm-groves waved over peaceful villages, green lawns were speckled with flocks and herds, luxuriant corn-fields were parked off by light palings, melon gardens ran along the river's verdant border, which was flecked with their golden fruit and flower; groves of the lote-tree and acacia sheltered the blossoming bean and lupine from the sun, and the whole scene seemed full of peace and gentle prosperity. As we slowly glided past this Eden, the inhabitants came to the water's edge to gaze upon the strangers; little children, hand in hand, almost too small to grasp the other: an old man, with flowing beard and patriarchal robes, was leaning on a graceful girl, whose unveiled limbs displayed a model of symmetry: the few other people whom we saw were employed in some light labour, from which they ran smilingly to watch our boat, as she glided away from a spot that, to this moment, appears to me to have realized all the poets feign of a Golden Age.

In little more than a fortnight we returned, and

passed by that little isle again. Hell let loose could scarcely have wrought a more fearful change than that which presented itself; the cottages were blackened and reeking ruins; the palm-trees were cut down, the gardens trampled and strewn with many a corpse, the dry corn burnt to the ground, boats were passing to and fro, busily conveying the little wealth of the islanders to the encampment on the mainland, and returning with the horses and camels of the invaders to eat up the standing crops; the gentle natives all gone, and replaced by a fierce soldiery, who prowled about this harvest of misery as if in search of further gleanings.

And what was become of the inhabitants — those whom I had almost envied as I past them by upon my desert way? The men were, for the most part, slain, and the less fortunate were outcasts on the desert or the mountain: the children were sold into slavery, the women became the prey of that ferocious soldiery whose arms now gleamed from every dark rock round: and that graceful girl with her father — where was she? Our blood boiled with indignation; we cursed the Pasha, his bloody policy, and the fiends who ministered to it; and I asked Mahmoud if he did not blush to belong to the same race as the authors of this accursed desolation: he shook his head, and said "it was all *God's will!*"

It seems that one of the natives of this island

had been murdered by one of a neighbouring district, and, that, according to the custom of the country, the friends of the murdered man demanded vengeance, or declared that they would take it. The Governor of Nubia happened to be travelling down the Nile at the time, and, hearing of the circumstance, sent for the chiefs of the respective tribes. The friends of the murderer having sent him a large bribe, he presented a slave (slaves are of no value here) to the injured party, and said, "Here is the man who slew your islander; kill him, and depart in peace." "Nay," replied the injured party, "the slave only acted by the command of his master; we will have that master's life, or else kill the Sheikh of the village." The Turkish governor, in a rage, ordered them to leave his presence, which they did, asserting their rights and defying his power. He proceeded to Dirr, procured a force of 300 soldiers, descended the river to the island, attacked it in the night-time, and we arrived the morning after this exhibition of Oriental justice.

Passing Korosko and Dirr for the present unvisited, we continued our course to Ipsamboul. Even this we left behind us, with the spacious ruined castle of Ibreem. To the left, from a perfectly level tract of sand, started up some rocks of the most singular form; one of them was a pyramid nearly as perfect as that of Cheops; another not unlike the

shape of a sphinx, the rough-hewn workmanship of Nature.

We encountered few incidents, and never met a boat upon a lonely river but one, which was crowded with slaves from Abyssinia. These captives are for the most part Christians when caught, but they are immediately Moslemized, lest — dying upon their passage from hardship or barbarity — Mahomet should lose their souls as well as the dealer their bodies.

On the eighth day after leaving Philœ, we arrived at Wady Halfa, about five miles to the south of the Second Cataract, which is impassable to boats; we were now about a thousand miles from the sea, and held a council as to our future proceedings.

The debate was opened by a disquisition on the savage beauties of Abyssinia, and the giraffe and hippopotamus shooting in the Meadows of Gondar. The confluence of the Blue and White Rivers at Khartoum was *only* twenty-five days' journey across the desert, and then the interesting part of the journey would commence. At present, the thermometer stood at 110°, what of that! the swinging pace, and the height of the dromedary, would circulate the air about us, and elevate us from the reflection of the desert's burning sands. In vain were arguments! We had been already five weeks in Savagedom, among sands, and deserts, and scorching

sunshines, and, to say the truth, we had had enough of it. Hurrah! then, for the cool breezy North — the dashing sea — and the Syrian saddle; enough of this bed-ridden, dreamy life, so charming a few weeks since. Forward! to a life of action, novelty, and newspapers; and let Abyssinia, Meroë, and the Desert, sleep on in their solitudes.'

This resolve having been come to, we stood away again up the river as far as the Cataract would allow. Then, landing on the Western bank, we set out across the desert to Mount Abousir, a steep and rocky hill which overlooks the whole range of the cataract, and commands a far view into the country beyond.

Soon after we struck into the desert, we came to an altar, sheltered by the only tree that was visible within the horizon: this altar was erected in honour of a santon, or Moslem saint, who, fortunately for the country, had perished here; it was dark-red with dried blood, and clotted with the gore of numberless victims.

The sun was intensely hot, the wind was high, and the air occasionally darkened by clouds of sand-dust whirled from the hills. We rode for some miles along the bank of the river, that rushed and foamed amongst a hundred little rocky islands, clothed by the incessant spray with verdure and low shrubs. On resuming our desert path, we pick-

ed up some apples of Sodom that lay strewn upon the desert without apparent connexion with any stem; they were of a bright gold green, about the size of an orange, but perfectly round and smooth; they gave the idea of being swelled out with the richest juice, that, when bitten, must gush forth to meet the thirsting lip; you crush this plausible rind, however, and a cloud of fetid dust bursts forth, leaving only a few little cinders as a residue.

At length we arrived at the mountain, very hot and very weary; and, what was worse, without any prospect of shelter or refreshment; when, turning a corner of the rock, we found the exemplary Mahmoud had been before us; there the tent spread its cool shade, and the coffee bubbled, and the pipes were only waiting to be lighted. Never did I feel more grateful for kind service: I had been ill for some days; and now, though utterly exhausted, I could lie upon a soft carpet spread upon the glowing sands, and from the shelter of the tent survey at leisure the marvellous prospect that lay spread before us.

There — one wide, wild desolate waste — lay the once fertile kingdom of Nubia, beneath our view. Except the few shrubs that crawled upon the river islands, and a grove of palms far away over Wady Halfa, there was not an appearance of life or vegetation under the sky: blank — utterly blank and

mournful deserts spread round us on all sides to the very horizon. Far away to the south, the river gleamed bluely; but then, entering the falls, it became black with shadows, or white with foam, until, after a tortured course of ten or twelve miles, it found rest in the wide levels of Wady Halfa. The rocks about us were of sandstone, grey and red, and there were some large masses of this stone turned on the upper side into scoria, having been partially fused by some means which only He who made them knows. There were also some boulders of granite lying about, but there was no rock of that description that I could discover; yet this was the highest spot for fifty miles around.

When rested, I walked down among the cliffs with our guide, who was an intelligent old Arab, and who spoke like a sportsman of the gazelles that come there to drink on moonlight nights, and the hyænas that come to watch them. Crocodiles are very numerous below the cataract, but they are never found in lively water. A hippopotamus made great ravages some time ago, near Wady Halfa, but he had not been seen for the last twelvemonth. Some few grey swallows flitted about the mountain, and these were the only living things I saw upon that scorching rock.

There are many names carved on this bourn of travellers; amongst others, those of Belzoni, in 1816,

Burckhardt, Irby and Mangles, Lord Lindsay and his lost friend, whose name I re-carved with care, as one of the few memorials that remain of one of the most amiable of men. There were many other names, but only one of woman that I could trace: it was simply written "Fanny,"* and was more probably carved in memory of one who was far away in her happy English home, than of one who stood upon that mountain by the carver's side.

The moon shone brightly over the desert as we regained our floating home, which presented a very altered appearance: the mainmast had been taken out, and lashed from the foremast to the poop; it supported an awning for the sailors, who were now to row perpetually, all hope of a southerly wind being vain in these regions. But the principal change consisted in her bow being turned northwards, down the stream and towards Christendom. Under these altered circumstances, we went on board with wonderful satisfaction; and, after a prayer to Allah for a prosperous voyage, the sailors took their seats for a month's rowing, and we started.

Our men commenced their homeward voyage with the following song, which I have rudely but faithfully translated. The music was monotonous, but

* I have at present in my possession *three* letters from unknown correspondents, each purporting to have graced the rock with this pleasant name. Yet, I will swear, there was only one "Fanny" written there.

soothing, and their oars kept accurate time to its cadences: —

THE ARAB SAILOR'S SONG.

Allah! il Allah! hear our prayer!
Just Prophet! grant that the winds be fair,
And the guiding Moon her lustre lends,
To favour the guest whom Allah sends.*

The stranger's home is far away,
'Neath the bright death-bed of the day;
O'er many horizons** his bark must go
Ere he reach that home. Row, Arabs, row.

Though gentle Nile, for stormy sea,
Though for forest dark, the bright palm-tree
He must change, yet his father's home is there,
And his love's soft eye is gloomed with care.

The pale-faced stranger, lonely here,
In cities afar, where his name is dear,
Your Arab truth and strength shall show
He trusts in us. Row, Arabs, row.

And they *did* row, sometimes eighteen hours at a stretch, only pausing to eat their scanty meals, and to drink of their beloved river. There was one Nubian in our crew, a harmless, inoffensive creature, who filled the indispensable situation of *but* to his comrades — submitting to all their jokes, and laughing at them, too, even when practised on himself. The day on which we entered Nubia, however, he came out in a new character, knocked overboard an Egyptian who had affronted him, and, to the surprise of all, actually volunteered a song. It was

* Mahomet hospitably taught that a stranger was a "God-given guest," which the Arabs naturally consider the best of introductions.

** In the East, they count distances by horizons.

received with great approbation, and repeated so often with shouts of laughter, that I obtained a translation of it. This I subjoin, premising that the *réfrain* "Durwadeega" is Nubian for "Henhouse," and that this henhouse is always the property of the wife, which her husband is obliged to make over to her in case of a divorce.

NUBIAN SONG.

A change came o'er my husband's mind;
He loved me once, and was true and kind;
Till his heart went astray, and he wished me away,
But he had no money my dower to pay.
Sing Durwadeega, Durwadee,
Oh dear to me is Durwadee!

For, blessed be Allah! he 's old and poor,
And my cocks and hens were his only store,
So he kept me still, for well he knew
If I went, that the cocks and hens went too.
Sing Durwadeega, Durwadee,
Oh dear to me is Durwadee!

But I saw him pining day by day,
As he wished his poor wife far away;
So I went my rival home to call,
And gave her the henhouse and him and all.
Sing Durwadeega, Durwadee,
Oh dear to me is Durwadee!

Then he tore his turban off his brow,
And swore I never should leave him now,
Till the death-men combed his burial locks,*
Then blessed for ever be hens and cocks.
Sing Durwadeega, Durwadee,
Oh dear to me is Durwadeega!

* The head of the Moslem is kept closely shaved, with the exception of one long lock of hair, which is left for the convenience of the resurrection angel, to pull him out of his grave. This is carefully arranged by those who prepare the corpse for burial.

"Songs of the Nile," and "River Melodies," and Arab poetry, by octavos, have found their way to English harp, and piano, and perusal. Many of these are very pretty, and some beautiful, but few bear any mark of coming farther from the East than Temple-bar: they are, in fact, *too good* to be true, — an objection the severest critic cannot bring forward against these genuine importations of mine. Every Nile-traveller will find his dragoman acquainted with the last two songs that I have quoted, and he can put them into better poetry for himself if he has leisure.

I shall quote one more song (which is Cairene, not Nilotic, by-the-bye), as illustrative of the singular manner in which these people blend love and religion, and express in the same stanza their devotion to their Maker and their mistress.

SERENADE.

Come forth, bright girl! and midnight skies
Will think that morning's gate uncloses;
The dazzled dew will think thine eyes
Are suns, and vanish from the roses.
Allah! how my heart-strings stir
Harp-like touched by thought of her!
Holy prophet! blessed be thou!
Fairest maiden, hear my vow!

The rich red wine seems mantling high
Within thy cheeks, so roseate glowing,
And beauty-drunkenness through mine eye
Is all my fevered heart o'erflowing.

Blessed Allah! send thy grace!
Blessed Allah! make my face
White, before thy presence dread
Wakes to life the slumbering dead.

Our crew sang for two months almost without intermission, yet never seemed to tire of their songs. Among the items furnished by our dragoman as necessary to our outfit, were a drum and some Nile flutes. The former consisted of a large earthen bowl, with a skin stretched over it; the latter resembled the double flageolet, and was made of reeds: it seemed capable of a much wider range of notes than their monotonous music required: its sound was shrill, but not unpleasing, and every sailor on board seemed a proficient in its use. I could detect but little variety in the airs, and the words were of the simplest kind. I listened as vainly for the songs of Antar among the Arabs of Egypt, as I had done for those of Tasso among the gondoliers of Venice. The songs of the Arab sailor are generally of home, of the Nile — never of war, but most of all of love; few of these last are fit for translation; and, as the home-made poetry of a people always takes for its subject that which is uppermost in their thought, I fear the sensuality of their muse must be taken as some index of their character. It is true that the songs of our sailors and our cottagers are not always of the most edifying character; but the popularity of some of the "old songs that are the music

of the heart;" the enthusiasm for the compositions of Moore, Burns, and Dibdin, which linked in one sympathy the castle and the cottage, and the sailor's home, — all proves that there is an echo to a purer tone even in the rugged and too-little-cared-for minds of our peasantry.

CHAPTER XIII.

ANTIQUITIES OF NUBIA.

Here Desolation keeps unbroken sabbath,
'Mid caves, and temples, palaces, and sepulchres;
Ideal images in sculptured forms,
Thoughts hewn in columns, or in caverned hill,
In honour of their deities and of their dead.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

We rowed all day, and floated all night at the river's will, from the time we commenced our northern course. The reader by this time must be as tired of river scenery, palms, villages, and deserts, as, to say the truth, we began to be ourselves. I shall, therefore, only allude, as we pass, to the architectural marvels that fringe this unique river.

Towards evening on the second day after leaving Wady Halfa, we repassed the extraordinary group of pyramidal and other rocky mountains I have mentioned in ascending the river, and then arrived at the chief wonder of Nubia, if not of all the Valley of the Nile. The correct name of this rock-temple is Abou-Symbal; but it is so much more generally known as Ipsamboul, that I shall make use of that name; writing as I do for English, not for Arab readers.

After sailing for some hours through a country

quite level on the eastern bank, we came upon a precipitous rocky mountain, starting up so suddenly from the river's edge that its very summits are reflected in the water. We moored under a sandbank, and, accompanied by half a dozen of the crew with torches, approached this isolated and stupendous rock. Yet, even here, the daring Genius of Æthiopian architecture ventured to enter into rivalry with Nature's greatness, and found her material in the very mountains that seemed to bid defiance to her efforts.

On the face of the vertical cliff a recess is excavated, to the extent of about a hundred feet in width. From this, four gigantic figures stand out in very bold relief. Between the two central stony giants, a lofty doorway opens into a vast hall supported by square pillars, each the size of a tower and covered with hieroglyphics; just enough painting still glimmers faintly on these columns to show that they were formerly covered with it; and the walls are carved into historic figures in slight relief; these, as our torches threw an uncertain glare over them, seemed to move, and become instinct with life.

This temple was dedicated to Athor, the lady of Aboccis (the ancient name of Ipsamboul); who is represented within under the form of the Sacred Cow. This was, however, a mere "chapel of ease" to the great temple, excavated from a loftier rock

about fifty yards distant. Between these two a deep gorge once ran to the river, but this is now choked up with sand, in whose burning waves we waded knee-deep to the Temple of Osiris.

Here, a space of about 100 feet in height is hewn from the mountain, smooth, except for the reliefs. Along the summit runs a frieze of little monkeys, in long array; as if the architect felt the absurdity of the whole business, or as Byron sometimes finishes off a sublime sentence with a scoff. Then succeeds a line of hieroglyphics and some faintly-carved figures, also in relief; and then four collossal giants that seem to guard the portal. They are seated on thrones (which form with themselves part of the living rock), and are about sixty feet high. One is quite perfect, admirably cut, and the proportions accurately preserved; the second is defaced as far as the knee; the third is buried in sand to the waist, and the fourth has only the face and neck visible above the desert's sandy avalanche. The doorway stands between the two central statues, and is surmounted by a statue of Isis wearing the moon as a turban.

On entering, the traveller finds himself in a temple which a few day's work might restore to the state in which it was left just finished 3000 years ago. The dry climate and its extreme solitude have preserved its most delicate details from injury; be-

sides which, it was hermetically sealed by the desert for thousands of years, until Burckhardt discovered it, and Mr. Hay cleared away its protecting sands.

A vast and gloomy hall, such as Eblis might have given Vathek audience in, receives you in passing from the flaming sunshine into that shadowy portal. It is some time before the eye can ascertain its dimensions through the imposing gloom; but gradually there reveals itself, around and above you, a vast aisle, with pillars formed of eight colossal giants upon whom the light of heaven has never shone. These images of Osiris are backed by enormous pillars, behind which run two great galleries, and in these torchlight alone enabled us to peruse a series of sculptures in relief, representing the triumphs of Rameses the Second, or Sesostris. The painting, which once enhanced the effect of these spirited representations, is not dimmed, but crumbled away; where it exists, the colours are as vivid as ever.

This unequalled hall is one hundred feet in length; and from it eight lesser chambers, all sculptured, open to the right and left. Straight on, is a low doorway, opening into a second hall of similar height, supported by four square pillars; and within all, is the adytum, wherein stands a simple altar of the living rock in front of four large

figures seated on rocky thrones. This inner shrine is hewn at least one hundred yards into the rock; and here, in the silent depths of that great mountain, these awful idols, with their mysterious altar of human sacrifice, looked very preadamitic and imposing. They seemed to sit there waiting for some great summons which should awaken and reanimate these "kings of the earth who lie in glory, every one in his own house."

We wandered through many chambers, in which the air is so calm and undisturbed, that the very smell of the torches of the last explorers of these caverns was perceptible.

After leaving Ipsamboul, we crossed over to a cavern in the opposite cliff, where is also hewn a rock-temple, called Gebel Adha, which was used in later times as a Christian church. It was a curious sight to see images of our Saviour, and the Virgin, blazoned in glowing colours on these walls and roofs, surrounded by trophies and memorials of the idols whose worship they had swept away. Steps, also hewn in the rock, descended to a certain distance towards the river, and then suddenly ceased: a convincing proof, among many others, that the level of the waters was much higher (even so lately as the christening of this temple) than at present.

Besides, where now could dwell the heathens for those temples, or the Christians for that church?

Not, surely, in the interminable desert wastes that alone encompass them in our times.

From these temples we dropped down the river, reading the Prophecies by the light alone of a most brilliant moon. We shot some dangerous rapids formed by a reef of rocks called Tosko; then passed the castle of Ibreem, which Candace defended from Petronius, the lieutenant of Julius Cæsar; and which Sultan Selim also used as a garrison to keep the Nubians in check.

The next morning we moored at Dirr, the chief town of Nubia, and went ashore to visit the king, as Mahmoud called Hassan Kiashef. It is a town of mud-houses, rather better built than any we had previously seen, scattered among gardens of herbs, melons, cucumbers, &c., and every dwelling sheltered by its own palms. Crowds of children collected round us, and accompanied our progress through the mud metropolis; all the women, too, ran to their doors to gaze at the white strangers, who, by the bye, deserved the epithet by this time as little as the Dirrians themselves.

We continued our progress to the palace, which was a mud building of immense extent, including many courts and stables. In front was an open space, shadowed by a noble sycamore; some travellers reclined under its shade on carpets, with two or three camels standing near. His sable majesty

had been transacting some business with the Turkish governor, and we now saw him returning to the palace, attended by half-a-dozen other very old men, all dressed in green or blue robes, and wearing very large, white turbans; this dress, together with their long, grey beards, gave the procession an imposing appearance; and it was not without some real reverence we made our salutation, which was very condescendingly returned. Our Nubian pilot ran up, and, seizing the passive hand of his sovereign, pressed it to his lips, and then placed it on his head. The poor old chief walked very erect, but listlessly; and his countenance wore an expression of long suffering and sorrow. He courteously motioned us to follow, and the way through several enclosures to a hall of audience resembling in most respects a barn. It was a large, dreary-looking room, with two window-(places); the only furniture consisted of a divan covered with an old carpet, a few mats spread upon the floor, and a litte shelf of unpainted wood, on which lay a rusty brace of pistols, a rude hammer, and some nothings. A few very primitive-looking swords, spears, and shields, were the only attempts at ornament.

Cheerless as was the aspect of the apartment, it seemed to suit the circumstances of the king, whose desolate and state-fallen condition accorded too faithfully with that of his dreary and forlorn kingdom.

His sons were all away, scattered over various parts of their father's desert realms; he had recently dismissed all his wives from his harem; and his care-worn old heart knew nothing of the comfort which cheers the old age that in return sanctifies an English home.

The royal savage received us with that air of lofty, yet gentle courtesy, which long and legitimate authority seems always to confer; and we seated ourselves as respectfully on his ragged carpet as if Mehemet Ali had never been known in Nubia. "Not all the water in the rough, rude sea, can wash the balm from an anointed king," I muttered to myself; "though the water be the Nile, and castor be the oil."

While we took our seats by his side, in compliance with his invitation, the elders of the village who had accompanied him seated themselves on the mats upon the floor, and the black mob waited outside, filling the doorway with a mass of ivory teeth, and woolly heads, and glittering eyes. After about ten minutes' conversation concerning the history and antiquities of his country, of which he professed himself profoundly ignorant, he broke up the levee by asking for some powder, and a knife, and raisins; and we rose. We thought this was rather a beggarly termination of a royal audience, but promised the valuables, and departed. We were followed by a crowd of naked menials, clamouring for "baksheesh,"

because one had handed coffee, another sugar, and the rest had been present at our presentation.

We sailed away in the afternoon, and visited the temple of Ammăda, about four miles down the river, on the eastern bank. It is very beautifully painted and sculptured, and, standing alone in the desert, some distance from the river, it is one of the most striking sights that occur in this district.

Proceeding some hours further the next day, we arrived at Korosko, a village situated in a green oasis of a valley, surrounded by dark, lofty precipices, through the gorge of which lies the desert route to Shendy. We found here a caravan and some officers of the Pasha's army going to Sennaar. The scene was rendered very picturesque by the encampment of the latter; their green and white tents scattered among the palms; their horses picketted on a grassy bank near the shore; and, further inland, groups of camels and dromedaries were reposing among the scattered cottages, their swarthy attendants squatted on carpets, or sauntering with their pipes among the groves. The women were gleaning in the corn-fields; the men, nearly naked, with spear and shield, and long black hair, were watching their flocks; and probably presented the same appearance that their father Ishmael wore four thousand years ago.

Wady Sebou, or Valley of the Lions, raised our

expectations of seeing some of these animals, *au naturel;* but we found them unknown; and books informed us that the valley obtained its name from the sphinxes that form the approach to its rock-hewn temple. Of these only two now remain, on each side, and a statue with a stelæ.

Then we entered again upon a desert country, which continued until we reached Seyala. Here our attention was called to a very singular phenomenon by Mahmoud's exclaiming, "Ecco! il soffio del diavolo!" and pointing towards the desert, where towered a vast column of sand, increasing as it whirled along to a mountain size. It strode the river and the waste like a flash of lightning, and disappeared over the far horizon. They say it is fatal to every living thing it overtakes unexpectedly, destroying whole caravans as instantaneously as the Assyrian-smiting angel.

The little village of Seyala stands some distance from the river. It is surrounded on all sides by a very wide and lonely desert, which recalled forcibly that sublime expression of Isaiah's, "the burden of the desert of the sea;" and, lo! towering above that sea, comes sailing a ship of the desert, with its pilot Arab. This traveller presented a fine specimen of the Bedouin warrior: his dromedary careered silently and swiftly over the trackless sands, his white robes fluttered in the breeze, a snowy turban shaded his

swarthy visage, and his attitude seemed at once full of energy and repose. The vision was sudden in its appearance and vanishing, and was in such perfect keeping with the desert, that the wastes seemed no longer desolate; though nothing was there visible but the white dromedary, and the dark shadow which alone accompanied it on its solitary way. The equipage of the desert-warrior was very simple: a large bundle of provender for his beast, and a water-skin hung at either side; he was armed with spear and shield, of course; a cumbrous sword swung from his saddle-bow, and a short knife strapped to his naked arm completed his appointments.

Advancing day and night, we next stopped at Dakké, the stronghold of old Æthiopian Magic, where Trismegisthus was adored, in whose honour a temple with some sculptures still remains.

But we are now approaching Guerf Hassan, which appeared to me the most striking and characteristic spot in Nubia, even while having Ipsamboul vividly in recollection; it is the strangest, most unearthly place I ever beheld. It was dark when we arrived in its neighbourhood, but this mattered little, as its mysterious recesses were only visible to torchlight in the brightest noon.

We passed through some corn-fields; then came a strip of desert, then a tall cliff, and in it the enormous propylon of the temple. This, though

built by human hands, stands out from the face of the mountain as if it had formed part of it from creation: four giant statues leaning against square pillars support its massive entablature. The vista of this colossal portico leads to a portal in the living rock some twenty feet in height, and this is the entrance to the temple. The *coup d'œil* as we entered was very imposing; a group of swarthy Arabs were waving blazing torches, and looked like officiating demon-priests, to the tall, awful, gigantic idols that towered above us: the temples seemed *full* of these grim statues, though there are only two rows, containing four in each. The massive pedestals on which they stand are but ten feet apart, which adds considerably to the effect of their enormous size. Hence we passed into a lesser hall, and then into the adytum: numerous torches here gleamed upon walls, shadowily giving out pictured battles, and kneeling priests, and stern deities: and in the centre of the shrine was a rude altar, beyond which sat four gigantic idols, with strange-looking crowns upon their heads, and mysterious emblems in their hands. It must be either a very strong or a very indifferent mind that can remain without some sense of awe in such a scene, or deny that it was well calculated to inspire such religious feeling as the eye alone can communicate to the soul.

There were many other chambers; but we soon

returned to the outer hall, and again reverently traversed its solemn aisles and galleries. Everywhere pillar and entablature were thickly encrusted with reliefs, and many a day might be passed in this sculptured library before its vast volumes were exhausted of their interest and meaning.

Once more the torches gleamed over god and warrior, and cavern and shrine; and we returned to our boat.

After Guerf Hassan comes the little temple of Dandour, rich in hieroglyphics; and then Kalabshé. We found the inhabitants of this warlike little city in a great state of excitement, on account of the desolation of the island, which I have narrated in ascending the river. They asked eagerly for powder, and we only wished we could have given them barrels of it; they also inquired anxiously if we had seen the governor, whose avenging visit they also were expecting, and preparing a warm reception for. Here is one of the largest and most perfect temples in Nubia, and, about two miles distant, another named Beit el Wellee. This last is of the Pharaonic times, and is adorned with beautiful paintings, whose colours are very fresh and vivid.

The following day we passed the temple of Debod unvisited, and, towards evening, arrived at Philœ, having been only fifteen days on our journey to the Second Cataract.

Soon after daylight on the following morning, the Rais of the Cataract made his appearance, bringing with him eight athletic Nubians accustomed to the rapids and his voice, to row the boat instead of our own crew. After salams, and pipes, and coffee, we made sail and floated away, surrounded by rafts, and swimmers, and waterlogs, carrying double. We soon left all these behind, and, in a short time more, our beautiful Philœ disappeared behind the tall cliffs for ever.

When we approached the Cataract, we stopped near a reef of rocks, to take in the grey old pilot of the Falls, and instantly a score of Nubians darted out of the crowd into our boat. Being already very top-heavy, owing to the masts and spars that were lashed to the foremast and poop, we desired Mahmoud to clear the decks in vain: one was a rais, and had a right to the risk of being drowned; another was his servant, another his cousin; and we finally shoved off, with five-and-thirty natives crowded on our narrow deck. The celebrated old Rais of all the Cataract is dead, and his rights seem to have descended in various falls to each of his sons, for there were several of these on board looking after their claims. The village Sheikh was there for the same purpose, and the Rais of the Lower Cataract also favoured us with his company, in order to ensure *his* share.

"Yallough!" we are off. The Nubian river-guides pull away desperately, shouting a vehement song to which their oars keep rapid time, and we rush on to the calm space where the waters seem to pause before they plunge below. The chief Rais stands at the bow, gesticulating violently, watching eagerly every motion of the boat, and shouting out directions to the pilot, which were drowned in the yell of the rowers, the roar of the torrent, and the vociferations of every one on board, except ourselves and the old pilot; *he* stood erect and silent, watching every wave with a calm but vivid eye.

Now we are in the Cataract — the waves foam up over the deck, and the spray renders everything invisible, except where the dark cliffs loom for a moment through its clouds; the boat darts wildly on through the weltering waters — a sharp rock seems to await her — she shuns it like a bird, and plunges down another cataract; then fairly spins round in its eddies, till, urged into way again by the sweeping oars, she seems to hover for a moment over the great fall; — then down she goes, as if performing a somerset; and we emerge about a hundred yards off from rock, and rapid, and exploit, which this last descent certainly deserves the name of.

We were now on the Egyptian Nile once more.

CHAPTER XIV.

ESNEH — ARNAOUTS AND ALME — THEBES.

As o'er the sands, in evening's glow,
That temple threw its lengthened shade,
Upon the marble steps below
There sate a fair Egyptian maid.

Epicurean.

Fierce are Albania's children * * *

Childe Harold.

Our anxiety for English letters and news acquired force, like gravitation, as we descended the river; and we stopped only at Assouan long enough to take in necessary stores, such as charcoal, flour, &c. I may mention here, for the information of travellers, that during the first month of our voyage we had used only the bread of the country, which was often very indifferent; but, on entering Nubia, we could no longer obtain even this, and Mahmoud thenceforth made Arab cakes for us of flour and water, which he baked upon a flat piece of iron; this we found so excellent and wholesome, that we used nothing else until we reached Cairo. Our crew here laid in little stores of merchandize, for presents or for profit, of the Nubian articles most prized in Egypt. The premiums and prizes for work which we had given them from time to time enabled them

to do this; and our boat became heavily laden with the dates of the Ibreehmee and other southern luxuries.

We found a steamer belonging to the Pasha at Assouan, which he had sent so far with Prince Albert of Prussia, who was now visiting Nubia, and we had here the luxury of reading some newspapers two months old, which were to us as precious as when they lie on our breakfast-tables in London, still reeking from the press, and containing all the news which only started into existence a few hours before.

Bacheet and another inhabitant of these parts had obtained leave of absence from Philœ, and we now set forward on our Egyptian voyage with a diminished crew. We stopped about midnight to take in the absent men under a grove of the best date-trees in Egypt. It was bright moonlight, and we found our excellent pilot waiting for us, surrounded by his family. It was interesting to observe the affectionate partings of these poor people, and the old father held up his hands to bless his son, remaining in that attitude till our boat glided out of sight. We offered fifty piastres to the crew if they took us to Esneh by the following evening, and they accomplished the undertaking, having been thirty hours at the oars without a moment's respite, except for meals, and while we were visiting Koum Ombos and the quarries of Hadjar Silsili.

The former is a noble relic of other times, and has still visible the tank wherein the sacred crocodile bathed, and the brick terrace on which he took his daily promenade. These Ombites were worshippers of this fishy beast; and a record survives of one of them, who was taken prisoner by the crocodile-haters of Dendera, and by them handed over, in a spirit of controversial irony, to his gods. It is unnecessary to add that these carnivorous deities conferred immediate immortality on their worshipper. The quarries of Hadjar Silsili afforded material for many of the cities along the Nile, and now they present an extraordinary appearance; hollowed out of the solid rock, there are squares as large as that of St. James's, streets as large as Pall Mall, and lanes and alleys without number; in short, you have here all the negative features of a town, if I may so speak; *i. e.*, if a town be considered as a *cameo*, these quarries are a vast *intaglio*.

One of our chameleons * died here of cold, the thermometer having *fallen* to 85^{0} in the shade; and his companion looked as if we were going too far with the experiment, as to whether they feed on air. It was not for want of food, however; for our cabin all day was in a haze of flies; and at night they lay

* We had brought a couple of these beautiful little creatures from Dirr, in Nubia. They changed colour when frightened or angry, but only from their bright green into deep shades of brown: their helmet-shaped heads were of an exquisite blue.

in thick, black masses along all the cornices, encrusting them like moss.

We had tried many devices to banish this plague by poison and smothering, but all the arts of a Brinvilliers would not induce them to touch the former, and they were too much accustomed to heat and stench to mind the latter. At length we circumvented them by a very simple means. As soon as they were settled for the night, a pan of charcoal was slowly moved round beneath them, till, stupified by the fumes of carbonic gas, they yielded up their lives to science, and fell, in a hissing hail, upon the burning coals. This sounds cruel, but we calculated on their being chloroformed previously to being grilled.

We found, on awaking the day after leaving Assouan, that we had passed Edfou in the night-time, and (shall I confess it?) we were rather glad than otherwise. By this time we had been so be-templed and be-ruined, that we looked on a city of the Pharaohs with as much indifference as on a club-house in Pall Mall. This is a bold, perhaps a rash, confession: but, as these volumes are a faithful record of impressions, I give them as they come, without selecting only the romantic or the dignified.*

* We passed Eilethyas by accident; it is one of the most interesting places on the river. See *Egyptiaca*, p. 92.

On our arrival at Esneh, we found it in the possession of a regiment of ferocious Arnaouts, who carry terror and oppression wherever they appear. These soldiers, having done their work in Syria, proved rather too troublesome even for the Pasha's authority, and were now under orders for the interior, with the intention that they should never return: they knew that they were doomed men, and this consciousness increased their habitual ferocity. When we approached the town, we found a fleet of candjiahs moored to the shore, and numbers of the soldiery amusing themselves, nominally, with shooting at pigeons, but, in reality, at any boat that ventured up or down the stream. Our flag protected us for the present, so we moored below the town, and entered the town well armed. That morning these ruffians had murdered an uncomplying woman in the open street; and the corpses of her husband and brother, who had ventured to interfere, were still lying on the steaming ground. The friends of the slain appealed to the governor, who remonstrated with the colonel of those brigands. His only reply was, "What would you have? it is time of war, and the poor fellows must be allowed to amuse themselves."

These "poor fellows," as their well-matched leader called them, are little more than a band of robbers, whom the Pasha keeps in his service, as

butchers do a ferocious dog, to let loose when they want to worry. They are nominally Albanians, but every man of any nation, who has so be-crimed himself as to have no country of his own, joins their desperate ranks, and assumes the white kilt and red cap that distinguish them. They were the most atrocious-looking band I ever beheld; the Spanish Chapelgorri, the Italian brigand, the Irish landlord-killer, are all quakers compared with the meekest of this fierce corps. They differed widely from each other in colour, feature, and dress; the only uniformity observable among them consisting in their arms, their kilts, and their lost, wild, reckless look.

We first visited the market and bazaars; the former was crowded with this fierce soldiery, drinking, singing, quarrelling, and firing off their bullets at random. Some were kissing each other with maudlin affection, some grasping each other's throats with curses; and one party was employed in slaughtering a huge ram, with whose blood they spattered themselves, and seemed to delight in his dying struggles. A few timid citizens hurried by, but no women or children were to be seen.

We proceeded, after visiting the governor, to inspect what is called the temple, but what is, in fact, a noble portico, consisting of twenty-four beautifully-sculptured columns of thirty-six feet in

height, supporting a ponderous roof equally rich in sculpture and hieroglyphics.

This portico stands in the centre of the town, whose streets are on a level with its roof. We walked out of a labyrinth of mud lanes into one of the finest specimens of architecture in the world. If the difference between the ancient and modern races be as great as that between their respective edifices, then the former must indeed have been the giants that the legends of the land would make them. This temple is carefully locked up, not for the sake of its antiquities, but because the Pasha, having excavated it for a corn depôt, has set his seal upon it. As we left it, there were two young Arnaouts thundering at the door; and, as they threatened to break it open and shoot the porter, they were of course admitted. On leaving the town, we found a large party of these "free companions" seated round a camp fire, shouting, singing, smoking, and discharging fire-arms, whose bullets whistled about us more freely than was agreeable.

There was something very picturesque, after all, about these ruffians, and I could not help lingering to contemplate this picture of human nature in its fearfullest form. Their lives are one succession of the wildest excitement; yet over all lay, perhaps unconsciously, the influence of a discipline, such as it was, that was now sending them unresistedly to

encounter pestilence and privation in the depths of Africa. There were some very youthful, and even noble, countenances among their crew, and their dress is the most picturesque possible. A red tarboosh, with a purple silk tassel, covers their long flowing locks, that stream down the shoulders like those of the cavaliers; an embroidered jacket of scarlet, or dark blue cloth; a very voluminous white kilt, reaching to the knee; greaves, or a sort of embroidered gaiters, upon their legs, and red slippers, constitute their dress. A brace of long pistols and a dagger are stuck in a large silken sash that girds their bodies; a long silver-mounted musket is slung at their backs, and a curved sabre at their side. They have by-laws peculiar to their regiment, and they frequently shoot their officers, electing others in their stead; when they went so far as to shoot their colonel, Mehemet Ali decimated them, and gave them a more severe commander; this having happened once or twice, they left off the practice. It may be supposed that troops like these are little adapted for garrison duty; and it was in consequence of their lawlessness, and the complaints made against them by Europeans, that Mehemet Ali had sent them away to perish in the depths of Africa.

When we reached our boat, we found all the crew, generally so anxious to rush into every town, cowering under the decks. We sailed at sunset,

and shall never see the Esnéan Sophia! As, however, we saw numerous Almé elsewhere, I may as well introduce some account of them here.

The *Almé*, or, in the plural, *Awálim*, means literally "a learned female."* This epithet is only strictly applicable to the singing women, whose music is sometimes of a very high order, and their accomplishments in other respects so numerous, that they frequently obtain fifty guineas from a party for their exhibitions on one evening. The dancing girls belong to a very inferior order, and are termed *Gawâzee* in the language of the country. These women used to have a settlement near Cairo, and attended all the marriage and other festivities of the *beau monde* there. The Moollahs, or Moslem divines, however, objected to them; not on account of their impropriety, but on the plea that the profane eyes of the "Infidel" ought not to gaze upon women of the true faith. There was such an agitation raised on this subject, that the priests prevailed, and all the Almé were sent, by way of banishment, to Esneh, five hundred miles up the river, where they are allowed a small stipend by government to keep them from starvation. This reformation in the capital produced frightful results, which I cannot allude to here, and Alméism still flourishes everywhere outside of the Cairene district. Sophia is said to be

* Lane.

the leader of this tribe, who have laws, finance regulations, and peculiar blood among themselves, like the Gipsies. She was for some time in Abbas Pasha's hareem, whence she escaped, and, after many romantic vicissitudes, obtained immunity and freedom from Mehemet Ali. She is now (1843) twenty-five years old, which is equivalent to at least fifty in our country; yet she preserves her beauty of face and form almost undiminished, and even her agility and grace.

The dance is the same with which their predecessors entertained the Pharaohs four thousand years ago, and almost every attitude we see here now is found upon the ancient tombs. It is an exercise rather of posture and acting than of agility, and requires long practice and considerable art to arrive at perfection. The professional dress is very picturesque and graceful, consisting of a short embroidered jacket fitting close, but open in front, long loose trousers of almost transparent silk, a cashmere shawl, wrapped round the loins, rather than the waist; and light elegant turbans of muslin, embroidered with gold. The hair flows in dark curls down the shoulders, and glitters with small gold coins; their eyes are deeply but delicately painted with kohl, which give them a very languishing expression, and a profusion of showy ornaments glitters on their unveiled bosoms.

When about to commence the oriental ballet, the Almé exchanges this for a yet lighter dress, throws off her slippers, and advances to the centre of the room with a slow step and undulating form, that keep accurate time to the music of the reed-pipe and the castanets, on which she is accompanied by her attendants. She then, after a glance round upon her audience, throws herself at once and entirely into the part she intends to act; be it pensive, gay, or tragic, she seems to know no feeling but that of the passion she represents. In some cases, a whole romance is acted; an Arab girl, for instance, — she listens at the door of her tent for the sound of her lover's horse, she chides his delay; he comes, she expresses her delight; he sinks to sleep, she watches over, and dances round him; he departs, she is overwhelmed with grief. Generally, the representation is more simple; the "Wasp dance" is a favourite ballet of the latter class; the actress is standing musing in a pensive posture, when a wasp is supposed to fly into her bosom — her girdle — all about her; the music becomes rapid; she flies about in terror, darting her hand all over her person in pursuit of the insect, till she finds it was all a mistake; then smiling, she expresses her pleasure and her relief in dance.

These dances are certainly not adapted for public exhibition in England, and would be considered as too

expressive even at the Opera; but they display exquisite art in their fashion, and would surprise, if not please, the most fastidious critic of the *coulisses.*

We had scarcely reached our boat when we saw the governor of Esneh coming after us; he entreated us to drop down the river to a little distance, and then resigned himself to the delights of his pipe and our Maraschino. He said the English were the most ingenious people in the world to make such liquor (which, he thought, was brewed in London like Double X), and that the people who built Thebes were fools compared to the men who could make such a drink like this. He staid with us for about an hour, — to our great inconvenience; and then departed with a bottle in his janissary's hands, and another within his own capacious girdle, that made him for the time indifferent to all the Arnaouts of Albania.

We were now *en route* for mighty Thebes, and grudged even the hour that was devoted to an inspection of the beautiful temple of Herment, or Hermonthis. This was built by Cleopatra, in honour of her having given birth to Cæsarion. It is richly adorned with painting and sculpture, containing every possible illustration of the "interesting event" it commemorates. Mehemet Ali has used this beau-

tiful building as a granary for some time; and its columns and entablatures have been forced into the more active service of life, in the shape of bridges and piers, in the same spirit in which the Pasha converted the indolent dervishes into soldiers.

We moored off Gournou on the eastern bank of the river, towards evening, leaving the opposite side, with Luxor and Carnak, for the last. We were soon in the saddle, and, preceded by an Arab guide with a long spear, went cantering over the level plains, luxuriant with cornfields, to the temple of Ammon, the Theban Jupiter: this building is about a mile from the river, and contained the Hall of Assembly of ancient Thebes. How curious it was, standing among those silent courts, to speculate on the species of eloquence which charmed or persuaded the listening crowds of three thousand years ago! There was party spirit even then, no doubt, and place-hunting; where that spirit now is, who shall presume to say? but permanent places for the patriots have long since been found in the vast cemeteries that surround us. The front of this building is very perfect, and imposing from its simplicity and vast extent. Evening fell as we stood there; obscurity, like that which wraps its records, gathered round it; and we rode back to our tent by the light of stars, which scarcely enabled us to keep clear of the mummy-pits wherewith the plain was honeycombed.

The next morning, at daybreak, we started for the Tombs of the Kings. I was mounted on a fine horse belonging to the Sheikh of the village; and the cool air of the morning, the rich prospect before us, and the cloudless sky, all conspired to impart life and pleasure to my relaxed and languid frame. I had been for a month almost confined to my pallet by illness; and now, mounted on a gallant barb, sweeping across the desert, with the mountain breezes breathing round me, I felt a glow of spirits and exhilaration of mind and body to which I had been long a stranger. For a couple of hours we continued along the plain, which was partially covered with wavy corn, but flecked widely, here and there, with desert tracts. Then we entered the gloomy mountain gorges, through which the Theban monarchs passed to their tombs. Our path lay through a narrow defile, between precipitous cliffs of rubble and calcareous strata, and some large boulders of coarse conglomerate lay strewn along this desolate valley, in which no living thing of earth or air ever met our view. The plains below may have been, perhaps, once swarming with life, and covered with palaces; but the gloomy defiles we were now traversing must have ever been, as they now are, lonely, lifeless, desolate — a fit avenue to the tombs for which we were bound.

After five or six miles' travel, our guide stopped

at the base of one of the precipices, and laying his long spear against the rock, proceeded to light his torches. There was no entrance apparent at the distance of a few yards, nor was this great tomb betrayed to the outer world by any visible aperture, until discovered by Belzoni. This extraordinary man seems to have been one of the few who have hit off in life the lot for which Nature destined them. His sepulchral instincts might have been matter of envy to the ghouls, with such unerring certainty did he guess at the places containing the embalmed corpses most worthy of his "body-snatching" energies.

We descended by a steep path into this tomb through a doorway covered with hieroglyphics, and entered a corridor, than ran some hundred yards into the mountain. It was about twenty feet square, and painted throughout most elaborately in the manner of Raphael's Loggia at the Vatican, with little inferiority of skill or colouring. The doorways were richly ornamented with figures of a larger size, and over each was the winged globe, or a huge scarabæus. In allusion probably to the wanderings of the freed spirit, almost all the larger emblems on these walls wore wings, however incompatible with their usual vocations; boats, globes, fishes, and suns, all were winged. On one of the corridors there is an allegory of the progress of the sun through the hours, painted with great detail: the God of Day

sits in a *boat* (in compliment to the Nile, he lays aside his chariot here), and steers through the hours of day and night, each of the latter being distinguished by a star. The Nile in this, as in all other circumstances of Egyptian life, figures as the most important element; even the blessed souls, for its sake, assume the form of fishes, and swim about with angelic fins in this River of Life. One gorgeous passage makes way into another more gorgeous still, until you arrive at a steep descent. At the base of this, perhaps four hundred feet from daylight, a doorway opens into a vaulted hall of noble proportions, whose gloom considerably increases its apparent size. Here the body of Osirei, father of Rameses the Second, was laid about 3200 years ago in the beautiful alabaster sarcophagus, which Belzoni drew from hence, the reward of his enterprize.* Its poor occupant, who had taken such pains to hide himself, was "undone" for the amusement of a London conversazione.

In Bruce's tomb we found paintings and excavations of a similar design; and in one of the numerous chambers, opening off the main passage, the two celebrated figures that have given this the name of the "Harper's Tomb." In these there is a great deal of life, though the bodies are a mere bag; but

* The British Museum, it is said, offered him £12,000 for it. It is now in Sir John Soane's Museum, in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

the countenance is full of expression, and the bending arm seems to sweep the strings as gracefully in this lonely tomb of three thousand years ago, as in the drawing-rooms of this year of grace, 1849.

There are numerous other tombs all full of interest; but, as the reader, who is interested in such things, will consult higher authorities than mine, I shall only add, that the whole circumstance of ancient Egyptian life, with all its vicissitudes, may be read in pictures out of these extraordinary tombs, from the birth, through all the joys and sorrows of life, to the death; the lamentation over the corpse, the embalmer's operations, and, finally, the judgment and the immortality of the soul. In one instance, the Judge is measuring all man's good actions in a balance against a feather from an angel's wing; in another, a great serpent is being bound, head and foot, and cast into a pit; and there are many other proofs, equally convincing, of the knowledge that this mysterious people possessed of a future life and judgment.

It was a merry day we passed among those tombs: we had not heard the sound of any European voice but our own for nearly two months, when, turning into one of these sepulchres, we met a large party exploring like ourselves. We invited them to "our tomb," where Mahmoud was preparing coffee, and, as their commissariat had been neglected,

they were too happy to be our guests. Mahmoud was at first startled at the unexpected increase of our party, but soon set himself vigorously about preparing dinner for nine out of a luncheon for two. Our new acquaintances consisted of a handsome young Russian Prince, — an antiquary who was residing at Thebes, named Castellari, — a German traveller, two Italians, and two Frenchmen.

Our servants had already made things comfortable in the charnel-house; a fire was lighted, carpets spread, and coffee was already diffusing its fragrance. Prince K.'s wolf-skin, added to our carpets, afforded sitting-room for the whole party, who now gathered round in a circle, comparing their various impressions in as many different languages; German, French, Russian, Italian, Arabic, and English, babelled our sentiments in that singular conversazione. The noonday sun now kept the outward world to himself, while the tomb afforded us its friendly shelter before our time: many a pipe smoked incense to the spirits of the departed kings whose unconscious hospitality we were sharing in common with the bat, the scorpion, and the worm.

About two o'clock our party broke up; and, notwithstanding threats of *coup de soleil* and brain-fever, we set out once more on our adventures across the mountains: the sun was scorching hot, and his rays, reflected from the calcareous cliffs, poured down as

in a focus upon our heads, while the hills excluded every breath of air. Nothing but the turban can stand this sort of sun-artillery with impunity; and to the defence which this afforded, our guides added cloaks, carpets, and whatever they could wrap round them.

As we descended a steep path that would have puzzled a European goat, my horse put his foot on the breast of a mummy king,* not recognising its humanity; and this once reverenced corpse was trodden into fragments by the rest of the party. What a story that ghastly royal village told of ambition and fallen power, and its vanity! A Pharaoh affording footing to an Arab horse, and trampled on by a stranger from the far north! "Is this the man that made the earth tremble, that did shake kingdoms; — that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?"

"Is thy pride brought down to the grave, and the sound of thy viols! Is the earth spread under thee, and doth the earthworm cover thee?"**

As we emerged from the mountains we came in sight of a vast plain, intersected by the Nile, and extending as far as the Arabian hills, a distance of about twenty miles. This plain was strewed with

* These are royal cemeteries.

** Isaiah xiv.

ruins of extinct cities and temples, appropriately intermingled with extensive cemeteries, wherein now slept quietly their once busy populations.

Every one has heard of Thebes, but I suspect very few have any distinct impressions on the subject; and when, in reading some traveller's journal, they think that they have arrived at this long sought-for city, they find themselves lost in accounts of Carnak, Luxor, Gournou, &c., but no Thebes. Now I am free to confess that, after having twice visited these localities, I am myself yet ignorant of the site of this renowned Thebes, unless it be a little mud village, with which the environs of Luxor are bespattered. The epithet is, in fact, a noun of multitude singular, embracing at least five different localities, once, probably, forming part of the same great city — in this wise: —

As we look down from these mountains, we discern, on our far right, the palace of Medinet Abou; before us the Memnonium; on our left, the temples of Gournou. Advanced some distance in front of these, stand, like videttes, the colossal statues of Shamy and Damy, or the vocal Memnon and his brother idol. Then a wide green plain, beyond which flows the Nile; and farther still, on the Arabian side, Luxor raises its gigantic columns from the river's edge, and the propylæ of Carnak tower

afar off. And this vast view scarcely embraces Thebes.

Descending from the mountains, we traversed the plain, which is everywhere excavated in search of antiquities, found here in such quantities that the Pasha has imposed a tax of 3,500 piastres a year on this subterranean harvest. Herds of wild dogs harbour in these excavations, and, as the stranger passes by, a thousand gaunt, wolfish-looking heads start out from their burrows, till the plain looks mottled with them, and a hungry howl runs along the ground for miles.

We rode straight to Medinet Abou, which alone would make the fame of any other locality; but Carnak eclipses all other wonders here, and seems to rule alone. This palace, however, is very grand in architecture, and gorgeous with painting. It is very perfect, too, and a considerable number of chambers are uninjured, even in the second story. Its labyrinth of immense courts, magnificently decorated; the innumerable pillars that everywhere rear their richly carved capitals, with or without cornices; the superb colonnades that surround the courts, all convey an idea of grandeur, before which every human creation, except Carnak, dwarfs into insignificance. Many of these columns lie strewn about in such profusion, that Aladdin's genii might have despaired of creating them, yet they measure

six-and-thirty feet in circumference, and gleam like a cathedral's painted window with every colour in the rainbow, bright and vivid as if the sun shone through them. *

It was late when we returned to our tents, and fourteen hours' exposure to the powerful sun of the Thebaid made us appreciate their shelter and repose.

The next morning we started before sunrise to watch the effects of the first smile of Aurora upon her son Memnon; he has long ceased to greet her coming with a song, but still, for tradition's sake, we wished to see the meeting. The brief twilight left us little time for a gallop of three miles, so we flung ourselves into the Turkisk saddles, without waiting to change them for our own; and passing by the pillared masses of the temple of Ammon, just visible through the morning mist, we stood under Memnon's colossal pedestal before the last stars had melted in the dawn. Alas! for the vanity of human plans and early rising, this was the only morning since we entered Egypt on which the sun refused to shine. Memnon himself would have been puzzled, in his best days, to tell the moment when he rose.

* A large colony of Christians was established here, and celebrated their worship in the great court, having covered the idols with mud. They fled before the Arab invaders, but ruins of their towns still remain.

There are two statues here, of similar size and proportion, about twenty yards apart: they stand isolated at present, though once forming the commencement of an avenue of statues leading to a palace now level with the sands. The most celebrated of these two statues stands to the north; he is hewn out of a single mass of granite, and measures, though seated, about fifty feet in height, exclusive of his pedestal, which measures six feet more. His companion's figure and proportions are a facsimile of his own, but I think the rock of which the latter is formed is of sandstone. The granite of which Memnon is composed has a musical ring when struck, and it is said that the priests used to produce the sounds which astonished travellers in ancient times. Humboldt, however, in his South American travels, speaks of certain rocks on the river Orinoco, called by the natives "laxas musicas," which *he* heard yielding low thrilling tones of music, and accounted for it by the wind passing through the chinks, and agitating the spangles of mica into audible vibration.

Whatever Memnon may have formerly done in the vocal line, much voice can scarcely be expected from him now, as his chest is gone, and replaced by loose stones. He fell down in the year 70 B. C., and was afterwards rebuilt. His pedestal is covered with Greek and other inscriptions, bearing testimony to

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his musical performances; one of these records the visit of Adrian and his queen Sabina. This Memnon is a corruption of Miamun, "the beloved of Jove," and, in hieroglyphic history, is called Amunoph the third; he reigned one hundred years before Sesostris, or 1430 B. C. His colleague was probably the Danaus who led a colony into Greece, and founded the kingdom of Argos.

From these statues to the Memnonium, as the palace and temple of Sesostris are called, is about half a mile. The magnificent hall of this temple is entered between two calm and contented-looking giants of rock, each twenty feet high. Within this hall was the library! The ceiling is covered with astronomical figures, which reveal the date of the building, 1322 B. C. On one of the walls, Sesostris is represented as seated under the shadow of the Tree of Life, while gods inscribe his name upon its leaves. It is impossible to convey any idea of the extent and variety of all these ruins, or of the profusion of sculpture and painting which everywhere adorns them. A statue of Sesostris lies without the temple, in the position which he has occupied unmoved since Cambyses overthrew him; the upper part of his body is broken into two or three vast fragments, and the lower is almost indistinguishable in its brokenness. The breadth of this enormous figure across the breast is twenty-three feet; the

whole was cut from a single block of granite, and polished as smooth as marble.

These are the principal objects of interest on the Lybian side of the river: there are many others, which, however they may attract the traveller, would scarcely interest the reader. The valley of the Tombs of the Queens (who even in death preserved their propriety, by lying apart from the coarser sex); the grottoes of Koornat Murraee: and the temple (afterwards the church) of Dayr el Bahree — tell enough of their own stories in their names for our purpose.

On returning to our boat, a curious rencontre took place on board a dahabieh that was conveying a lion from Abyssinia to the Pasha's menagerie at Cairo. Mr. M.'s servant had purchased a wild fox from one of the natives, and, being anxious to see if the lion would devour him, he threw him into the cage: Reynard was game, however, put up his bristles, showed his teeth, and threatened hostilities; the lion howled with affright, and made such efforts to escape, that he very nearly upset the boat, to the great ire of the Rais, whose life might have paid forfeit for his prisoner's loss. He began to curse all the foxes and Christians under the sun, together with their beards and those of their fathers: the gallant assailant was rescued and restored to liberty.

Of Luxor I shall only observe that it forms a fitting approach to Carnak. It presents a splendid confusion of courts, columns, statues, ruins, and a lonely obelisk, whose companion was removed to Paris, and now flourishes on the "Place de la Concorde." We found here the luxury of Arab horses, and rode along a wide plain covered with coarse grass, and varied by some gloomy little lakes and acacia shrubs, when, at the end of an hour, our guide reined in his horse, and pointed with his spear towards the south. There lay Carnak! darkening a whole horizon with its portals, and pyramids, and palaces. We passed under a noble archway, and entered a long avenue of sphinxes: all their heads were broken off, but their pedestals remained unmoved since the time of Joseph. It must have been a noble sight in the palmy days of Thebes — that avenue of two hundred enormous statues, terminated by that temple. Yet this was only one of many: at least, seven others, with similar porticoes and archways, led from this stupendous edifice. We rode through half a mile of sphinxes, and then arrived at the temple, the splendour of which no words an describe.

A glorious portal opened into a vast court, crowded with a perfect forest of the most magnificent columns, thirty-six feet in circumference, covered with hieroglyphics, and surmounted by capitals,

all of different patterns, and richly painted. No two persons agree on the number of these apparently countless columns: some make it amount to 134, others, 160; the central measure sixty-six feet in height, exclusive of the pedestals and abacus. Endless it would be to enter into details of this marvellous pile; suffice it to say, that the temple is about one mile and three quarters in circumference, the walls eighty feet high, and twenty-five feet thick!

With astonishment, and almost with awe, I rode on through labyrinths of courts, cloisters, and chambers, and only dismounted where a mass of masonry had lately fallen in, owing to its pillars having been removed to build the Pasha's powder manufactory. Among the infinite variety of objects of art that crowd this temple, the obelisks are not the least interesting. Those who have only seen them at Rome, or Paris, can form no conception of their effect where all around is in keeping with them. The eye follows upward the finely tapering shaft, till suddenly it seems, not to terminate, but to melt away and lose itself in the dazzling sunshine of its native skies.

For hours I wandered eagerly and anxiously on, through apparently interminable variety, every moment encountering something new, unheard of, and unthought of, until then. The very walls of outer

enclosures were deeply sculptured with whole histories of great wars and triumphs, by figures that seemed to live again. In some places, these walls were poured down like an avalanche, not fallen: no mortar had been ever needed to connect the cliff-like masses of which they were composed: at this hour, the most ignorant mason might direct the replacing of every stone where it once towered, in propylon or gateway, so accurately was each fitted to the place it was destined to occupy.

We rested for a long time on a fallen column, under a beautiful archway that commands a wide view of the temple, and then slowly and lingeringly withdrew. The world contains nothing like it.

We returned to Luxor by a different, yet similar, avenue of statues to that by which we had approached: as we proceeded, we could discover other pillars and portals far away upon the horizon, each marking where an entrance to this amazing temple once existed.

From the desert or the river; from within, or from without; by sunshine, or by moonlight — however you contemplate Carnak — appears the very aspect in which it shows to most advantage. And when this was all perfect; when its avenues opened in vista upon the noble temples and palaces of Sesostris, upon Gournou, Medinet Abou, and Luxor; when its courts were paced by gorgeous

priestly pageants, and busy life swarmed on a river flowing between banks of palaces like those of Venice magnified a hundredfold — when all this was in its prime, no wonder that its fame spread even over the barbarian world, and found immortality in Homer's song.

For many a day after I had seen it, and even to this hour, glimpses of Thebes mingle with my reveries and blend them with my dreams, as if that vision had daguerreotyped itself upon the brain, and left its impress there for ever.

CHAPTER XV.

DENDERA TO CAIRO.

To glide adown old Nilus, where he threads
Egypt and Æthiopia, from the steep
Of utmost Axumé, until he spreads,
Like a calm flock of silver-fleeced sheep,
His waters on the plain; and crested heads
Of cities and proud temples gleam amid,
And many a vapour-belted pyramid.
Witch of Atlas. — SHELLEY.

We sailed away from Thebes one balmy evening, and soon the only testimony of its existence was in our memories, and in a young jackall, one of our exportations thence; this creature, true to its instinct, now began a series of mournful howlings, and continued them without intermission throughout the night.

Our crew, who had hitherto been paid extra for almost every day's work, began to wax very indolent when they had no longer the stimulus of bribery to induce exertion. We at first remonstrated with them, but in vain; we then insisted on leaving the worst of them behind us; and thereupon the remainder, with the exception of the pilot, broke out into regular mutiny. We had only ourselves to depend upon, as Mahmoud had taken fright, and Abdallah

was a mere negation. We were in the loneliest part of the river, and far from any authority to which we could appeal; so that we were reduced to the unpleasant necessity of taking the law into our hands. The men rested on their oars, and refused to move: the Rais affected not to hear; and Mahmoud said we must make the best terms we could come to: so while Russell stood garrison to our cabin fortress, I jumped forward among the crew, and, with the hippopotamus-thong whip, soon restored the Rais to his hearing, and the crew to motion. Some took to their oars, others jumped up, and seemed inclined to show fight; but the eloquent mouths of our pistols dissuaded them, and added weight to an injunction to row if they valued their lives. This restored discipline at once, and they pulled with such hearthy good-will that we reached Dendera that evening.

On arriving there, we left the boat, to visit the temple, telling the Rais he might sail away, if he dared; and then, leaving no firearms behind us, we started across a jungle-covered plain for the famous ruins that vindicated their sacred character by inducing the Indian troops under Sir David Baird to kneel down and pray before them.

As, after bright sunshine, it is some time before our eyes recover their preception of objects in the shade, so, after Carnak, all other buildings appear

divested of interest and grandeur, until our bigotry for the former subsides. Thus we found at Dendera, that though its appearance at any other time would have struck us as magnificent, demands on the sublime had been rendered so unconscionable by Carnak, that we could not appreciate this beautiful temple as it deserved. It is pronounced by critics to afford a lamentable proof of the decadence of architectural art under the Ptolemies; but to the mere eye of curiosity its appearance is very majestic, and nothing can be more rich than the carvings and hieroglyphics that adorn the massive pillars crowned with heads of Isis. The ceilings are covered with the celebrated astronomical paintings; and the next most popular representation throughout this edifice seems to be that of serpents: these appear in every variety of form and attitude; some are walking on human legs, and some spinning erect upon their tails like cork-screws, while they present strange offerings to deities equally preposterous. We crawled upon our hands and knees through many dark passages, and emerged upon a terrace commanding a noble view. When the priests of old stood here, and looked upon that wide realm over which they held such unlimited influence, how little did they think of the coming time, when their faith should be forgotten or derided; and strangers, from a land unknown in their estimation of the

world, should stand there alone! The solitude all round us was profound; the sudden arrest of cultivation, when bordering the desert, was curious; for there the high corn waved, and here the sands spread up to its very roots like a lake; far away, the Nile glistened under the setting sun; and beyond, rose the smoke of Keneh, and the chain of hills that reaches to the shores of the Red Sea.

We visited the Governor at Keneh, and having put an effectual stop to the mutiny, we darted away as rapidly as oars could drive us; nor, from that day forward, had we the slightest cause of complaint to find with our crew.

The next day we reached Bellini, the starting-point for Abydus, where stands the temple of Sesostris, which I have described in ascending the river. There was a small garrison of cavalry here, with handsome, serviceable-looking horses. There was also a settlement of Almé. We saw herds of buffaloes in the river, that seemed to be playing at hippopotamus, keeping only their noses above the water.

During several following days we killed a great number of quails and a jackall, which I speared, after fair duel, in his mountain den. Our remaining chameleon and the little jackall died of the cold, which sometimes even we felt very severely in contrast to the weather within the Tropics.

Arrived at Manfaloot, I went ashore to visit Dr. Dubray, a French physician, in the Pasha's service. It is not likely that these pages will ever reach his eyes, so that I the more willingly make mention of his kindness and disinterested offices. He had charge of a regiment of Egyptian cuirassiers, mustering about eight hundred strong: the horses were at grass, but the men looked tolerably well drilled and appointed.

This was a considerable town "in the time of the Mamelukes," an epoch which is made use of in this country, as "before the Union" is in Ireland, to denote a period of prosperity that never existed. The encroachments of the Nile and the taxing officers have very much impaired the extent of Manfaloot, which does not now contain above five thousand inhabitants. The day we left Manfaloot, we fired at a great number of crocodiles with our usual lack of success in obtaining their scalps: and, after some days, only varied by such incidents as I have already noticed, we arrived at Cairo, exactly two months after we had started from thence.

We remained only one day at the Hôtel d'Orient, by far the best in Cairo; and then removed into lodgings, where alone one can enter into the spirit of Egyptian life. At an hotel, surrounded by Europeans, one is entirely secluded from those hourly opportunities of observation so entertaining to a

traveller. We had taken a friendly leave of all our crew, and presented Bacheet with a present in addition to the gratuities expected by his comrades. We were much pleased by the poor fellow bringing us, in a day or two afterwards, a present of the Ibreemee dates, so prized by the Egyptians: it was all he had to offer.

We took a house to ourselves in the Soog Ezallot, or "place of the evening market." As in Parisian houses, the porter and his family occupying the ground-floor were handed over with the rest of the furniture. Having paid our rent in advance, we were then required to pay nearly as much more "for the possession of the key," which consisted of a piece of wood with some nails in it.

Our mansion contained a courtyard, in which stood a sickly-looking palm-tree, crisped by the heat, and a couple of hencoops that wore almost as much appearance of vegetation. On the first floor were two sitting-rooms, consisting of high, vaulted chambers without doors, opening off a terrace, and two bedrooms. Above these were other rooms and terraces, shaded by trellised vines. It required but a short time to take an inventory of the furniture, which was particularly simple — it consisted of one deal table and two iron bedsteads. A broad wooden bench ran round the sitting-rooms, on which we were to sit in state, or squat in comfort. This

looked desolate enough at first; but our camp-furniture, mats, carpets, and other appendages of Oriental travel, soon gave an appearance of comfort to the bleak dwelling and its forlorn walls.

And yet there was a strange air of luxury over all this. The stone floors and whitewashed walls, and curtainless windows, had always a golden glow of sunshine, or a deep, refreshing gloom flung over them. The vine-leaves threw a cool, quivering shade over the marble terraces: the fragrant fumes of Latakeea mingled with the balmy air; and the coffee, which was always roasting, contributed its pleasant odour. Nubian lances, spears, and clubs, mingled with European arms, glittered on the walls; showy carpets and wild-beast skins covered the floor and the divans. A hyæna's hide bespread a table strewn with antiquities, and our boat-flags hung round as tapestry. Chibouques, yellow and red slippers, tarbooshes, sashes, and other Orientalisms, lay strewn about, and we at least accomplished what would have been a very comfortable drawing-room for Inkle and Yarico.

A visitor (and we had numbers of all descriptions) enters; and before his feet are unslippered and tucked beneath his gown on the divan, one servant presents him with coffee, and another with the pipe: by the time the latter is finished, we are apparently on the most intimate terms. Whatever may have

been in old times the prejudices against Europeans, the Cairenes are both now anxious and willing to cultivate our acquaintance, and express themselves with apparent frankness upon every subject. One soon gets tired, however, of people whose principal contribution to society is the smoke of their pipes; whose every principle (if they have any) is so opposed to our own; and whose information (if they choose to give any) is so little worth having.

There is an evident expectation in the public mind of Cairo that England must, sooner or later, take a leading part in Egyptian politics; and not only here, but all over the East, every traveller, at all capable of conversing with the natives, constantly meets the question, "When are the English coming?" It would be difficult to trace the origin of this popular impression, which certainly has not arisen from any vapouring, political or private, on the part of the English. There are, moreover, no Englishmen in the Pasha's service, except the superintendent of the gardens at Rhoda, and of the sugar plantations in the Saïd; but Frenchmen abound in every department, from Suleiman Pasha* to the apothecaries' apprentices in the female surgery. It was Frenchmen who made Egypt a naval power; it was

* Colonel Sève, a French renegade, to whom are principally owing the improved tactics, discipline, and conquests of the Egyptian troops.

a Frenchman who organized the army that all but overthrew the empire of Constantinople; it was a Frenchman who made the magnificent docks at Alexandria; and the celebrated engineer, who controls the destinies of Egypt by means of acting upon the inundations of the Nile, is M. Linant.

So it is, however, as every traveller will bear witness: *England is expected in the East*, where, hitherto, she has never planted a standard, except in defence of the Crescent, and the integrity of its dominions. That she will ever come forward to vindicate the Cross where her best and bravest blood was shed in its defence six hundred years ago, is very problematical; however, "Gold wins its way where angels might despair," and the interests of India may obtain what the Sepulchre of Christ has been denied.

This is, perhaps, a delicate subject, and for the present we will waive it, and proceed with our parting view of Cairo.

This is the most decorous and dissolute metropolis that the sun shines over. The women seem all secluded in the interior of the hareem, or in the no less impenetrable garments that conceal their persons and their faces in the street; the men all wear the yet more baffling disguise of patriarchial appearance and stern formality. As you walk through these masquerading streets, among men whose

thoughts appear abstracted from the earth; and women who are all veiled or in mourning, except their flashing eyes, you might imagine you beheld the people of Nineveh the day after they had repented. No Dead Sea fruit ever presented a more hypocritical exterior or a truer type. Enter into their houses, and inquire of their household gods; listen to their familiar conversation, and study the complexion of their thoughts; mark the objects of their desire, their ambition, and their zeal: and you will at once see the necessity of such strict observance of appearances to cloak the tissue of sensuality and guilt that pervades the population of Egypt. In the streets perhaps there are none of the manifestations of vice too usual in European cities; but in the latter the moral filth is confined, principally at least, to sewers, which, foul as they may be, are only partial. But in Cairo the whole city is so inundated with uncleanness that these sewers are undistinguishable, and it would seem that the ocean that now wraps the Cities of the Plain could alone purify its polluted precincts.

Cairo, nevertheless, affords to the traveller and the student many sources of entertainment and information: there is an excellent library, liberally open to all strangers, principally under the care of our consul, Mr. Walne. There is also a literary institution, founded by Dr. Abbott and M. Priess, having

in view not only a collection of literature connected with Egypt, but the publication from time to time of new discoveries and old MSS. In the former are held "weekly conversaziones," where the appearance of the guests is as various as the information to be obtained from their frank and ready courtesy. Pipes and coffee, nargilehs and sherbets, are handed round to turbans and tarbooshes, hats and grey hairs. Conversation flows freely and richly among men who seldom meet, and who appreciate that meeting; all have something to communicate, and all have much to learn. Among the leaders of this society, I need only mention our distinguished countrymen, Sir Gardner Wilkinson and Mr. Lane; M. Linant and Clot Bey, and the more enlightened travellers who fill the numerous hotels. I must not omit allusion to the valuable Antiquarian Museum of Dr. Abbott, and the well-chosen collection of antiquities and natural history belonging to Clot Bey; both of which are most liberally open to the inspection of strangers.

The public schools well deserve a visit: but, as they are the most praiseworthy of Mehemet Ali's numerous establishments, I shall introduce them when speaking of his life and character.

I have little to say of the mosques; they considerably disappointed my expectation. There are four hundred in Cairo, and scarcely any village in

Egypt is without one; yet there are only three in Nubia: to this latter cause the Moollahs attribute a tendency to drunkenness and other failings, not uncommon above the Cataract. These mosques consist generally of cloisters surrounding a square court, in which stands a fountain for ablutions; the sanctuary is always on the eastern side, towards Mecca; the whole aspect of the building reminds one of a gutted cathedral. It is true that some are elaborately decorated with painting or sculpture of leaves and flowers: and friezes, consisting of verses from the Koran, are not unfrequent; but, generally, nothing can be more naked and cheerless than the interior of a Moslem temple. It contains no furniture, except a pulpit, a few mats, and a number of small lamps suspended from the dome. When a mosque becomes old, it is considered irreverent to repair it; it is therefore allowed to fall, and a new one occupies its place. Attached to the mosque of El Azhar is the university, in which the classic languages are unknown, science much neglected, and the students' minds are principally exercised by a vast quantity of Moslem theology.

There are several hospitals and schools of medicine; among the latter there is one devoted to educating female surgeons, a measure characteristic of the scruples of the country. The greater number of pupils are Abyssinians and negresses, who learn

quickly, and pay great attention to Mademoiselle Gault's lectures on medical science; that branch of it especially in which it may be supposed women are most personally interested, and in which they here practise exclusively.

These are all dry details, which are uninteresting, I fear, to those who do not visit Cairo, and too meagre for those who do. I shall not allude to the Courts of Justice further than to repeat what I heard of them from natives and from Europeans, that the name is a melancholy irony applied to tribunals in which the unblushing bribery is only to be equalled by the profound ignorance of those who administer the laws.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PYRAMIDS.

Instead of useful works, like Nature great,
Enormous, cruel wonders crushed the land.
ANON.

The Pyramids had become as familiar to our view as the Grampians to a Highlander, when we suddenly recollected that they still remained unexplored, while the days of our stay at Cairo were already numbered. Our donkeys, which stood at our door, from sunrise to sunset, were put into immediate requisition, and we started about four o'clock in the afternoon of the 11th of April.

Mahmoud had a child's birth-day to celebrate: as he assured us we should find comfortable lying among the tombs, and have no occasion for his services, we rashly believed him, and left him to his festivities. He was the best of dragomans, but an Egyptian still; and we afterwards found cause to repent having trusted to him.

We sallied forth then from the "City of Victory," mounted on two donkeys; Abdallah and another donkey preceded us, as servants always do in this paradoxical country, while a sumpter-mule and four Arabs brought up the procession. Arrived at the

mouldering quays of Cairo Vecchia, we embarked our donkeys in a large ferry-boat, and passing the Nilometer on the island of Rhoda, we landed on the western bank of the river.

The sun had just set in glory over the crimsoned sands of the Lybian desert, throwing the mountain pyramids into fine relief against the gilded sky. The plain which we traversed was *riante* as if it led to Paris: wide tracts of waving corn spread around, and an avenue of acacias concealed all of the distant city, except its minarets, and the silvery mist which rose amongst them. The air was very balmy, and the breeze, which had been exploring the Pyramids, seemed to be whispering its discoveries to the palm-trees and the ruins, which ever and anon, we came to and passed by. Suddenly the rich verdure ceased like a shore, and the ocean-like desert received our silent steps, moving over its waves as noiselessly as ships upon the water.

We killed, somewhat wantonly, two large silvery snakes, traversed some dreary glens, and surrounded by an immense number of Arabs, soon found ourselves at the foot of the rocky platform on which stands the Great Pyramid. This advantage of ground has been but little noticed by travellers, and yet it gives an elevation to the site of the Pyramids of at least forty feet above the surrounding plain.

Vast as these Pyramids appear at a distance, they

do not appear to increase in size as you approach; but, when at length you arrive at their base and look up and around, you feel, verily, as it were, in an awful presence.

After indulging in the course of reveries usual on such occasions, we proceeded in a practical spirit to examine the sepulchre that was to be our lodging for the night. The rocky platform I have alluded to is hollowed out towards the south into numerous tombs; from these the unresisting dead have long been banished, but they still retain a charnel chill that must soon be fatal to anything except Egyptian fleas. While we were waiting for dinner, such swarms of animals came crawling and quivering over us, that it gave the sensation of wearing a hair-shirt; but there is nothing like statistics — my companion slew fifty-seven vampyres in the few minutes that intervened between our ordering dinner, and its appearance.

We did not remain long at a banquet in which we performed a passive as well as an active part, but hurried out to the Pyramids, accompanied only by five Bedouins, who had volunteered as guides. It was midnight when we stood under the greatest wonder of the world, and then it appeared in all its mountain magnificence, eclipsing half the sky.

We climbed up some distance on the eastern front, when we found the narrow entrance, and

then half slided down a long narrow passage, which was admirably fitted with grooves for wheels the whole way through. There seemed to me little doubt that a car was adapted to run down this inclined plane, to be carried by the momentum of its descent up a circular staircase, now broken, which leads to another downward passage. These steep and smooth passages we traversed with considerable difficulty, the torches and naked Bedouins rendering the heat and other annoyances excessive: at length we stood in the King's Chamber, in the heart of the Pyramid, lined throughout with polished granite, and now quite empty. The body of the king has hitherto escaped the researches of caliphs and antiquaries, but is supposed by Sir G. Wilkinson to lie beneath a niche which he points out.

As soon as we entered, the Bedouins set up a shout that made the Pyramid echo again through all its galleries, and then, turning rudely round, they demanded money. We put a fierce face on the matter, and began our difficult ascent with the assistance of the angry guides. When we emerged from the Pyramid, the Arabs turned round again, and declared that we should not stir a step until we gave them money: as I put my hands in my girdle, a gigantic Bedouin drew near to receive the expected tribute, and was not a little startled to feel the cold muzzle of a pistol at his breast instead; he fell back

terrified, and humbly begged for pardon. Giving him a kick, and threatening him with the bastinado, we drove our guides before us to the other pyramids, which we wandered about in the bright moonlight; and then, after a glimpse at the Sphinx, and a shot or two at jackalls, returned to our abominable tomb. Here, stretched in our capotes upon the hard rock, we were soon asleep.

By the first daylight we resumed our investigation of the Pyramids and the Sphinx. The latter is cut out of the solid rock, except the leonine paws, which are *built* of hewn stone. In front of this monster, and enclosed within her arms, is a paved court, about fifty feet in extent, on which sacrifices were offered; and there was a sanctuary in her bosom (which sounds well) wherein the priests worshipped. This fantastic animal is "always found representing a king, the union of intellect and physical force;" it abounds in ancient Egypt, though never elsewhere in a form of such colossal dimensions as here. It is called by the Arabs "the father of terror," or "immensity." Its features, as well as its attitude, convey an impression of profound repose: the former are mutilated, and want a nose, but appear to be Egyptian in their character; though they are partially painted of a dirty red colour, and might pass for an exaggeration of the countenance of a pugilist after severe "punishing," some authors

have traced in them an expression of the softest beauty and most winning grace. If it were so, the contrast of such loveliness with the colossal size, and its leonine body, must have produced a wonderful effect — Una and her Lion, or the zodiacal signs of Leo and Virgo, thus blended into one. Near her is an immense tomb, discovered by Colonel Vyse, containing a coffin of black basalt, which still remains; and a sarcophagus, which has been removed to the British Museum.

Sir Gardner Wilkinson dates the building of the Pyramids about 2160 B. C., or six hundred and twenty-five years before the Exodus of the Israelites. Lord Lindsay ingeniously argues that they were built by the shepherd kings, who were expelled by Alisphragmuthosis, the Pharaoh of our Joseph. This would make their date about 1900 B. C. Much has been said to contradict their having been used as sepulchres, and with some appearance of plausibility. If they *were* so used, they were doubtless connected also with the worship of the country, and may have been selected for the former purpose on account of their consecration, as we use Westminster Abbey. There seems little doubt that their form, which we find also at Benares and in Mexico, was meant to symbolize the creative principle; as was the obelisk, though in a manner which we cannot here discuss.

The erection of one of these Pyramids is ascribed to a Pharaonic princess of great beauty, who was one day taunted by her father with the inutility of the admiration that she excited. Pyramid-building was then the fashion in the family, and she vowed that she would leave behind her a monument of the power of her charms as perdurable as her august relations did of the power of their armies. The number of her lovers was increased by all those who were content to sacrifice their fortunes for her smiles. The Pyramid rose rapidly; with the frailty of its foundress, the massive monument increased; her lovers were ruined, but the fair architect became immortal, and found celebrity long afterwards in Sappho's song.

Another legend relates that a beautiful Greek girl, named Rhodope, was once bathing in the Nile, and the very birds of the air hovered round to gaze upon her beauty. An eagle, more enthusiastic than the rest, carried away one of her slippers in his talons: but, startled by a shout of Memphian loyalty, he let fall the souvenir at the feet of Pharaoh, who was holding his court in the open air. It is needless to add how the Egyptian Cinderella was sought, how found, how wooed, how won; and how she now sleeps within her Pyramid.*

* The Great Pyramid covers eight acres, and is eight hundred feet in height, or one-third higher than the cross on St. Paul's. Each

On our return to the tomb, we found the Sheikh of the village, who had heard of the robber-like demands of the Arabs, and had brought his executioner to bastinado them. We refused, perhaps weakly, to permit this; and, distributing some small gratuities that made the whole tribe happy, we took our homeward way, shooting quails, as we passed through the corn-fields.

We visited the island of Rhoda on our return to Cairo, and were very hospitably received by its superintendent Mr. Trail, who escorted us over Ibrahim Pasha's extensive gardens: these are watered by innumerable little canals, filled from the river by the perpetual labour of sixty buffaloes at the water-wheels. There are some fine orange and pomegranate groves here; English art has done its utmost to imitate a European garden, but in vain.

The following day I left Cairo without regret, except in being obliged to part from my fellow-traveller, who returned to Europe, while my path lay eastward still. Henceforward, I pursued my pilgrimage alone, and absence taught me still better to value the friend that I had lost: I have hitherto abstained as much as possible from introducing his

Pyramid appears to have stood in a square court, hewn from the rock, in which were small tombs, and perhaps temples. Far away as the eye can follow, a line of Pyramids of various dimensions succeeds, among wavy heaps of tombs and catacombs, that might seem to be a cemetery for the world.

name in these pages, feeling that I had no right to involve him in my published adventures. Neither is this a fit place to pronounce his eulogy; but a tribute to intellect, courage, kindness, and considerateness, can never be misplaced; and such I offer to the memory of HENRY RUSSELL.*

* Would that this page were a worthier monument of my lost friend! He died at Cairo, and was there buried, according to a wish he had often expressed, on the 20th January, 1847.

CHAPTER XVII.

MODERN ALEXANDRIA.

Cette ville devait être la capitale du monde. Elle est située entre l'Asie et l'Europe, à portée des Indes et de l'Europe.

NAPOLEON.

Having been baffled in my hopes of reaching Abyssinia, I had hastened my return to Cairo, intending to accompany the caravan of pilgrims some distance on their route towards Mecca, and then, branching off to Mount Sinai, to enter Palestine by way of Petra, and the eastern shores of the Dead Sea, if possible. However, I found the caravan had already left Cairo; and the heats, which had now set in, added to my recent illness, rendered it impossible to undergo a journey of forty days on dromedaries, so that I was forced to proceed to Syria by way of Alexandria and Beyrout.

The day after I left Boulac the northerly wind came on to blow so heavily that we were obliged to moor under the shelter of the bank. When the gale had a little subsided, I landed to get some shooting as the boat proceeded slowly down the stream, and soon lost myself in the immense plain of wheat and Indian corn that bordered the river.

I shot a considerable number of quails, and still wandered on; now, allured to the banks by a flight of wild fowl; now to the edge of the desert, by the tracks of a wild boar. Having thus consumed some hours, I found myself on the edge of a jungle, which, suddenly ceasing, left nothing but the desert and the river round me. The day had been intensely hot, and I was suddenly overtaken with extreme fatigue, and obliged to lie down upon the sands to rest. Far as the eye could reach there was no shelter — no, not so much as a beetle could repose in; and the only Arab who accompanied me replied to my glance with a significant "Mafeesh," and a shrug of his shoulders. Even he was panting with exhaustion, and streaming at every pore. The boat was still far away, and we had nothing for it but Islam "resignation" — not even a pipe.

And there ran the river — deep, bright, and cool — before my dazzled eyes; and, after long hesitation, I could resist no longer, but plunged in, and swam, and drank, and revelled in its waves with excessive luxury. Fever almost instantly came on, and I remember little but vague sensations of dreamy but intense suffering, until we reached the Mahmoudieh canal: here I was transferred into another kandjiah, and reached Alexandria on the fourth night after my departure from Boulac.*

* This journey is now (1849) performed in twenty-four hours by

Strange and African as Alexandria had appeared to me three months before, it now seemed familiar and almost European: the streets were thronged with men in hats, and smooth chins; the cafés rustled with newspapers: the walls were placarded with announcements of the evening's opera; and, above all, the calm sea, reflecting many a British flag, lay smiling before me with its old familiar face.

Mehemet Ali found Alexandria a nest of pirates; he has made it the most important seaport in the Levant, and restored to commerce the Indian path that had been neglected for centuries.*

"Alexander," said Napoleon, "displayed his genius more in founding Alexandria, and in contemplating the transportation thither of his seat of empire, than by the most dazzling victories. The city ought to be the capital of the world; it is situated

steam. The transit across the desert is now a mere party of pleasure, and, before leaving Cairo, I had seen some ladies with reticules and lapdogs into a well-appointed four-horse Suez mail, that would not have created much surprise in Piccadilly. There are comfortable resting-places twice on the route, and temporary establishments every ten miles: the entire distance of eighty-five miles is performed without fatigue by those who have made arrangements beforehand, and I never heard a complaint of any of the multifarious baggage of Indian passengers being lost. On arriving at Cairo, a day or two is allowed to travellers to examine the city, and then they are forwarded to Alexandria by English steamers plying on the Nile, and the Mahmoudieh canal.

* The Venetians obtained a settlement here, and carried on their energetic commerce thence to India, but the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope passage left it again desolate.

between Asia and Africa, and connects Europe with the Indies. It is the only safe anchorage for five hundred leagues of coast, extending from Tunis to Alexandretta; it is at one of the ancient mouths of the Nile. All the squadrons of the universe might find moorings there, and in the old port are safe from storms and invasion."

The Mole which protects this important harbour is terminated by a modern lighthouse, placed where the Pharos of the Ptolemies once stood. This now offers at once a warning and an invitation, a battery and a beacon. The western harbour is very deep and safe, but protected from the sea by a sunken reef of rocks that rise too near the surface to permit a first-rate line of battle-ship to pass over it without unloading her guns and heavy stores. The eastern harbour is exposed and unsafe, yet was the only port until recently allowed to Christian vessels. Mehemet Ali abolished this injurious and degrading prohibition — which had long afforded a proof of the extent to which our scruples with regard to Turkey permitted us to be bullied in the East.

The population of Alexandria amounts to about 65,000 souls, of which the crews, the workmen, the soldiers, and other immediate dependants of the Pasha, form one-third.

Consuls of all the principal nations of Europe reside here, and, together with numerous wealthy

merchants, might form a very extensive society. The influence of the habits or the climate of the country, however, seems to prohibit this, and there is little or no domestic intercourse among the European families resident here. The climate is the worst in Egypt, the neighbourhood the least interesting; and nothing but business or duty can induce a residence in a city that combines all the worst features of European and Asiatic life, with the least possible of their advantages.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MEHEMET ALI.

Ambition, like a torrent, ne'er looks back;
It is a swelling and the last affection
A great mind can put off. It is a rebel
Both to the soul and reason, and enforces
All laws, all conscience; tramples on Religion,
And offers violence to Loyalty.

Catiline — BEN JONSON.

In Europe, the name of Mehemet Ali is familiar to every mind as one of the great powers that share the rule of this great world: we think of him, however, as seated on the throne of the Pharaohs and the Ptolemies; and seldom recur to the eventful and romantic career which shot him upward from the rank of a peasant to that of a prince. His great namesake,* and Cromwell, and Bernadotte, and Napoleon himself, accomplished less extraordinary and unlooked-for enterprise of life than this Turk has done, although the distance and obscurity of the people over whom he attained empire render his deeds less dazzling to careless or indifferent observers.

Like Mahomet, when he awoke from the dream of youth to the reality of manhood, he found him-

* Mahomet, Mehemet, and Mahmoud, are modifications of the same name.

self in the depths of poverty; like him, too, he married a wealthy widow, who was the foundress of his fortunes. — Unlike the Prophet, however, he had none of the prestige of ancient blood to buoy him up, and was indebted to himself, and not to his ancestry, for his rise.

Napoleon and Mehemet Ali came into the world in the same year of grace, 1769.* The same war opened to each an arena for his strength; and widely differing as were the places and the people amongst whom they had to struggle for the mastery, there are strikingly similar events in the career of both. Each was an adventurer on a foreign soil; each attained political, through military power; each trampled fearlessly upon every prejudice that interfered with his progress; and each converted the crisis that appeared to threaten him with ruin into the means of acquiring sovereignty.

Mehemet Ali was born at Cávala, a small town in Roumelia, and is therefore a Turk, and not an Albanian, as was long supposed from his career being so much involved with Albanians. His father was poor, and united the occupation of a fisherman to that of a farmer: the former business proved more congenial to the boy, who early acquired a character

* No Turk ever knows his own age with certainty; but the Pasha of Egypt has freely adopted what French flattery suggested. It is unnecessary to remind the English reader that the same eventful year gave birth to the Duke of Wellington.

for courage and conduct that invested him with great influence amongst his associates. Some pirates having made a foray into his neighbourhood, he hastily collected a body of volunteers, pursued the marauders in fishing-boats, recovered the spoil, and made himself a reputation in Cávala. This, in return, made him lieutenant to the governor, and an object of interest to the governor's wife; both of these circumstances he turned to such good account, that, on the decease of his superior, he succeeded to his command, his widow, and his wealth. He then engaged extensively in the tobacco trade, for which his situation afforded him great facilities: bankruptcy or ambition induced him to abandon business; and he eagerly embraced an offer to command a contingent of three hundred men raised at Cávala to recruit the Turkish army in Egypt.

During the operations against the French, and particularly at the battle of Aboukir, he distinguished himself conspicuously, acquired the rank of colonel, and obtained unbounded influence among the soldiery. When Egypt was evacuated by the French and British forces, the Mameluke Beys remained in arms, and endeavoured to set aside the power of the Porte by nominating a viceroy of their own selection. The soldiers — particularly the Albanian regiments in the Turkish service — had already shown symptoms of a mutinous spirit, and now

loudly demanded their arrears of pay and a change of officers.

Mehemet Ali knew well the strength of these soldiers and their wrongs, and also the weakness and inability of the Turkish general, Khosref Pasha: he therefore boldly declared himself the delegate of the soldiery, and a redresser of their grievances. Khosref Pasha sent to require his attendance at a council to be held at midnight; and Mehemet Ali received the invitation while attending the evening parade. He well knew the purport of that message, and the deadly vengeance that suggested it; but he also read his own power in the Pasha's fears. "Out of the nettle, danger," he knew that he could "pluck the flower, safety:" smiling, he kissed the general's note, and returned for answer "that he would be sure to come:" then turning round to the soldiers on parade, he exclaimed, "I am sent for by the Pasha, and *you* know what destiny awaits the advocate of your wrongs in a midnight audience: — I *will* go — but shall I go alone?" Four thousand swords flashed back the Albanian's answer, and their shout of fierce defiance gave Khosref Pasha warning to escape to the citadel; there, it is unneccessary to say, he declined to receive his dangerous guest.

"Now, then," said Mehemet Ali, "Cairo is for sale, and the strongest sword will buy it." The Albanians applauded the pithy sentiment, and in-

stantly proceeded to put it into execution by electing Mehemet Ali as their leader. He opened the gates of the city to the hostile Mamelukes, defeated Khosref Pasha, took him prisoner at Damietta, and was acknowledged as general of the army by the Beys, in gratitude for his services.

Osman Bardissy and Elfy Bey were the leaders of the Mamelukes at this conjuncture, and became the deadliest rivals after the defeat of their common enemy, Khosref. Osman was in possession of the city, and nominally commanded the Albanian troops; but Mehemet Ali stimulated them to demand the arrears of pay; while, at the same time, he stirred up the inhabitants of Cairo to resist the impositions which Osman laid upon them, in order to satisfy these demands. The Bey, unable to withstand this simultaneous resistance of the people and the soldiery, sought safety in flight; and Mehemet Ali, after some further intrigues, named Kourschyd Pasha Viceroy of Egypt. He took upon himself this authority, with the most submissive respect for the Porte, and in the same submissive spirit permitted himself to be made Kaïmakam, the next highest in command.

The Sultan confirmed these nominations; and some time afterwards, when the intrigues of Mehemet Ali had induced the Sheikhs to name him Viceroy in place of Kourschyd Pasha, he also confirmed the latter appointment. This extraordinary

favour was obtained not only by the fear that the new Pasha had inspired, but also by a bribe of £300,000, which Mehemet Ali engaged to pay, and which the Porte knew that he alone was capable of raising. This took place in the year 1805. The following year, Osman Bardissy and Elfy Bey, his powerful Mameluke opponents, died almost at the same time, and left him without an enemy, except the Porte, to fear.

The Sultan, determined on turning his powerful vassal to some account, now ordered him to proceed into Arabia, on a campaign against the Wahabees. This powerful sect was founded by Sheikh Abd-el-Waham, in the middle of the last century, and was to Mahometanism very much what Puritanism was to the English Church. It also called the sword to the assistance of its faith, and took possession of the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina, in 1810. Encouraged by their success, these Puritans of the desert next turned their power to practical and profitable purposes — "sequestering" with impartial zeal the caravans of pious pilgrims and Nammon merchants, until they had acquired immense wealth, and rendered themselves independent masters of the Hedjaz.

The commands of the Porte to exterminate this sect were intended to exhaust the resources of Mehemet Ali, and perhaps to lead to his destruction;

but he embraced the commission with gratitude. It gave him an opportunity of rendering his name popular as a defender of Islam, and an excuse for raising a larger army, destined ultimately for higher purposes. Toussoon, the Viceroy's son, had been appointed a Pasha of two tails, and was to head the expedition; but, before he departed on his mission, the Mamelukes were sacrificed, as a hecatomb to the peace of the province. Invited to a conference, and entrapped in the citadel, as I have before related, they were massacred almost to a man: this took place on the 1st of March, 1811; and, in the autumn of the same year, the expedition proceeded to its destination in Arabia. At first, the armies of the orthodox encountered some severe checks; but the following year Medina was restored to the Porte, and, in 1812, Mehemet Ali proceeded in person to the Hedjaz; partly to superintend the war, but principally, perhaps, to allow an opportunity for his celebrated appropriation of all Egypt to be announced by his minister, Mohammed Laz.

The Porte, taking advantage of the absence of its Viceroy, with the treachery and meanness peculiar to the politics of the Divan, appointed a successor to Mehemet Ali in the person of Lateef Pasha. Treachery, however, has seldom failed to find its match in Egypt, and Lateef was beheaded

by the lieutenant of him who was Viceroy in his own right.

The Porte, at first, affected great indignation at this summary proceeding, and proclaimed Mehemet Ali an outlaw. He disregarded the epithet and its consequences, accomplished his pilgrimage in the Holy Land he had rescued from the heretics, and returned to Egypt, covered with glory, to make further preparations for war.

He had long seen the necessity of adopting European military tactics, and resolved to create an efficient army. The first attempt at drilling Moslems by Christian officers created such discontent that he was obliged to abandon the project; but he sent the mutinous troops to conquer and die in the interior, when his son Ismail Pasha perished at Shendy.* His next attempt was to create an army of Blacks from among the conquered people of Sennaar and Cordofan: with this view, he instituted a Camp of Instruction at Assouan, to which 30,000 Blacks were sent from the interior and subjected to military discipline under Colonel Sève, called in Egypt "Suleiman Pasha." This experiment was unsuccessful; the Negroes died so rapidly that in a few years only one regiment remained from all this number. The Pasha then formed an Epyptian camp at Farshoot, to which native conscripts were

* See *ante*, p. 160.

gradually added, in proportion as the elder recruits had acquired sufficient discipline and *esprit de corps* to keep the younger in subjection.

Whilst the senior portion of the Pasha's army was thus expiating its mutinous demonstrations in the wars of Æthiopia, and the junior was learning obedience in the barracks at Farshoot — the insurrection of the Greeks broke out, and Mehemet Ali applied to be allowed to subjugate the Morea for the Porte. This proposition at once restored him to Ottoman favour, and gave him an excuse for making new levies and raising fresh contributions among the people. All his energies were thenceforth employed in erecting barracks, schools of instruction, hospitals, and even factories. He invited French officers and instructors, who arrived in numbers; and while he was concentrating a disciplined army at the capital, he was scattering manufactories over the country. Every peasant might now be said to be in the Pasha's service, and Egypt was one vast camp, or factory. The Egyptian, who was not impressed as a soldier or a manufacturer, was obliged to work hard at the water-wheel or plough, in order to supply food and forage for the troops; and the energies of the country were strained to the uttermost to meet this exigency of the Pasha's destiny. Had he now failed, or even faltered for a moment, he well knew that a successor and the bowstring

would be the result. He struggled bravely on to find stakes for the great game of power — and he won it.

The Porte gladly received his offers of assistance, and conveyed its acceptance of them in the form of a command to send an armament into Greece.

In 1824, a powerful fleet, consisting of sixty-three sail, with one hundred transports, left Alexandria for the Morea, having on board 16,000 infantry and 700 cavalry, besides artillery. Ibrahim Pasha commanded this expedition; he was successful in his descent on Candia, and partially so in his operations in Greece. The Egyptlian fleet, however, was soon afterwards involved in the destruction of that of Turkey at the battle of Navarino in 1827, and Ibrahim returned with the remains of his army to Egypt. Previous to the Greek expedition, Mehemet Ali had been promised the Pashalic of all Syria, instead of which the Porte conferred upon him that of Candia — this island not having been included in the treaty for the independence of Greece. *

He now devoted himself to the creation of a native fleet, and soon found himself in possession

* It should in justice be mentioned that, while the Greeks suffered fearful persecution in all other parts of the Ottoman empire, they enjoyed perfect toleration in Egypt during the war.

of a formidable naval force, with dockyards and arsenals capable of maintaining it, and supplying all its casualties. He knew that the Porte waited only for an opportunity to declare war against him, and he boldly flung down the gauntlet first.

Abdallah, Pasha of Acre, had long been his enemy, and had lately given refuge to some Egyptian deserters, whose surrender was demanded by Mehemet Ali. This the Pasha refused, whereupon the viceroy informed him laconically, that "he would come and take them, with *one* besides."

In 1831, Ibrahim Pasha led an army of 24,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry against Acre, which he took after six months' siege, and sent Abdallah prisoner to Cairo. War was now openly declared between Mehemet Ali and the Porte, and a numerous army belonging to the latter was defeated at Homs by Ibrahim Pasha, in 1832. Soon afterwards, the Egyptians routed the army of the grand vizier Hosseyn Pasha, at Beylan, which laid open to them the passes of Mount Taurus; and, in the December of the same year, the victory of Koniah, with the capture of the Turkish general, Reschid Pasha, gave Ibrahim Pasha the command of Constantinople. Then the Porte awakened to a sense of its weakness, and, like the horse in the fable, invoking the assistance of man to expel the deer from his pasture, applied to Russia for protection. The Autocrat immediately marched

25,000 soldiers to Constantinople, and, whilst he protected the Ottoman empire from its enemy, wrung from it the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi for himself.

In the hour of his success, Mehemet Ali had had the self-command to require only the Pashalic of Syria; and, therefore, when Russia and the other great European powers interfered to prevent his further progress, he was able to fall back with dignity on his first demand. This was ultimately granted: the Taurus became the limits of Mehemet Ali's province; and, in return, he engaged to pay the same tribute to the Porte that had hitherto been promised, rather than made good, by the petty Pashalics of Syria.

Mehemet Ali had now almost succeeded in his project of restoring the bounds of the ancient Caliphat: Bagdad alone remains to be invaded, and from this, the conqueror of Syria prudently abstained; he knew that his principal security consisted in his being nominally a dependent of the Porte; and that the European powers would respect his territory only so long as it professedly belonged to the Sultan: that position once abandoned, one person had the same right, "of the strongest hand" to Egypt, that he or any other could lay claim to.

The Sultan, who felt his disgraces rankling deeply, re-organized his army and refitted his fleet. The

former was crushed at the battle of Nezib, in 1839, and the latter deserted to the Pasha. In speaking of Syria, I shall have to touch upon our brief but momentous campaign; undertaken, not so much against Mehemet Ali, as to rescue Turkey from the protectorate of Russia. Meanwhile, the hereditary Pashalic of Egypt alone has been acceded to by Europe; and the Pasha has nothing left from his Syrian campaigns except glory, and its cost — the impoverishment entailed upon his country. *

We have thus seen Mehemet Ali, unaided but by his own daring and predominating genius, raising himself from the humblest rank of life to the very highest — creating an army for the purpose of opposing the enemies of the Faith, and thus rendering himself popular as its defender, while he was educating troops to oppose the vicegerent of the Prophet. There is little doubt that, but for the interference of Europe, he would have dictated his own terms before the walls of Constantinople; although the faith of his followers was probably still too reverential towards the Sultan's *sacred* character to permit of his obtaining the throne.

Mehemet Ali is now** seventy-nine years of age. He wears well, and but little of decline is visible in

* While we were at war with him, the Pasha forwarded the English mails with most civilized fidelity to India.

** This was written in 1848.

the energies of his mind or body, though his restlessness and love of change are remarkably increased. He is of low stature, not exceeding five feet three inches, but powerfully built; and his keen, piercing eyes, and the energetic character of all his movements, indicate a sanguine and nervous temperament. Generally speaking, the Turks consider repose essential both to dignity and comfort; but this man used to pace his apartments by the hour with the eager and determined tread characteristic of his disposition. His beard is snowy white, and though the lower part of his countenance is indicative of sensuality, his fine forehead and massive brows predominate over that expression so common in men of great physical energy. He has a delicate, well-born hand and foot; his dress is of the simplest description, but well put on; and his whole bearing is dignified, yet courteous and affable. In his conversation, there is a prompt frankness that appears to spring from a disdain of concealment, and an impetuosity that could not have been exceeded in his youth.

Mehemet Ali had great aspirations, and of these he realized more than meaner minds could have believed possible, considering the circumstances of his state, and of the country he rules over. One object of his romantic ambition was the regeneration of the mouldering Ottoman empire, and he even volunteered to abandon all his prospects in Egypt

for the situation of Grand Vizier. Failing in this, he endeavoured to make of the despised Arabs a martial people; of their exhausted and impoverished province, a fertile and manufacturing nation. Severe, but not cruel, he relentlessly swept from his path every opponent of his power; yet he was never known to cherish vengeance, or to punish for a personal offence towards himself. Enthusiastic to credulity, he eagerly listened to the golden promises of adventurers; and out of their many schemes of advantage he has realized the wealth of a cotton trade, olive plantations, sugar factories, and the more doubtful prosecution of other branches of industry. He abolished the power of punishing by death, until lately vested in the governor of provinces; he established a consistent system of taxation, which, though greatly abused by his officers, is tolerably just in its construction. He called in the aid of European skill to instruct his people, indifferent to the prejudices it raised against him; he tolerated all religions, and discountenanced fanaticism. With regard to this latter, I may mention an anecdote illustrative of his character. Some Europeans attending his levee, he observed that his servants made use of the left hand, which is considered impure, in presenting coffee to his guests: while the Christians were present, he took no notice of an insult of which they were unconscious; but, immediately on their retiring, he

sent for the servants, and thus addressed them: "As you seem to think yourselves dishonoured in paying due respect to my guests, you shall no longer run the risk of having your prejudices thus offended. Depart instantly for Mecca; there you may exercise without control the fanaticism that is preferable in your eyes to good manners." They were banished.

Under the stern rule of the Pasha, Egypt has become perfectly secure to the traveller, and even Syria still feels the beneficial effect of his temporary rule. Besides having sent many Egyptians to study in England and France, the Pasha has invited instructors in every branch of science and of letters into Egypt. He established three classes of schools, under a ministry of public instruction: these consist of *primary*, *preparatory*, and *special* schools. Of the first, there are sixty-six, containing each one hundred pupils, between the ages of eight and twelve. They attend during three years, and each year are renewed by one-third, as the former goes out. They learn the elements of the Arab language and arithmetic.

These primary schools send pupils to the two *preparatory* schools of Abouzabel and Alexandria, where they learn the Turkish language, mathematics, geography, and history.

The *special* schools are intended for the engineers, artillery, cavalry, infantry, medicine, agriculture, foreign languages, music, and the arts. There are

altogether in Egypt nine thousand pupils, who are lodged, clothed, and fed at the Pasha's expense.

Once entered as a pupil in any of these schools, the Egyptian becomes the property of the Pasha, and may be sent into his fleets, his armies, his manufactories, or even his *kitchens*, at his will.* Education, under these circumstances, is considered by the natives as only one degree less to be dreaded than conscription.

Egypt is the easiest country in the world to conquer; she is so used to it! In fact, it is her ruler or rulers, for the time being, that offer the sole resistance she has ever made. All over the East, and here especially, power has been established by blood alone: since the days of Cleopatra, Egypt has never had a sovereign of Egyptian birth, nor have her people ever had a national cause; their lives are passed in one long effort to avoid taxation, which deprives them of every comfort; and conscription, which renders its victims hopeless: once ranged under the Crescent banner, there is no hope of freedom but from infirmity or death. Brilliant as have been Mehemet Ali's successes, fertile as is the country he rules over, and peaceful as it appears to the grateful

* Some of his chiefs having remonstrated against sending their sons to Europe for education, the Pasha yielded — and sent the boys to work as labourers at the *barrages* of the Nile.

traveller, there is perhaps no more miserable nation under heaven.

The Egyptians have no motive to action; success in life is with them impossible; and their voluptuous climate contributes to the enervation of all moral and physical energies. As their climate predisposes them to indolence and sensuality; their government to servility, meanness, and dissimulation; their religion to intolerance, pharisaic observances, and falsehood; it may easily be imagined that there is little in their education to counteract the tendencies which are inevitable from such influences. They have no country to lose, no independence to forfeit, no patriotic feelings to be wounded: their national condition has fearfully fulfilled the prophetic doom, that they should "be trodden under foot and abased; a nation that should ever be under the rule of foreigners." The Viceroy has exhausted the last vital energies of the country; and no government can retain influence in Egypt after his decease, that is not possessed of wealth enough to restore some chances of prosperity, and principle enough to restore some promise of independence to this degraded and unhappy land.

Meanwhile, Cairo is now the crowded thoroughfare of England and India: our flag has become as familiar to the Arabs of the Red Sea as to the people

of Alexandria. Egypt is rapidly becoming influenced, not by the nation that gives officers to her armies, but by that which gives merchants to her counting-houses, and capital to her exhausted resources. She is becoming gradually and unconsciously subsidized by the wealth that England lavishes, and hourly more entangled in those golden chains from which no nation ever strove to loose itself.

With what temper Mehemet Ali regards this state of things it would be vain to inquire. At his age a man is more likely to repose with complacency on what he has already accomplished, than to enter upon a new course of difficult, if not hopeless, undertakings. He had energy and moral courage enough to encounter the vicegerent of the Prophet in the field, and to vindicate the independence—not of his country, but of his command. Like Henry VIII., he converted the fat revenues of peaceful drones into the tough sinews of ambitious war; like Peter the Great, he made an army of steady soldiers out of slavish serfs, and a commanding navy out of a nest of pirates; like Sultan Mahmoud, he annihilated the Mamelukes, whose existence was more incompatible with his authority than was that of the Janissaries with the power of the Porte.

Mehemet Ali has done all this, and thereby placed himself in the front rank of history.

But there is a more difficult task than that of mustering forces in the field, or appropriating the property of the defenceless, or making massacre of imprisoned victims. To invest a nation with nationality — to give to popular impulse the character of public opinion, was beyond his power, or never suggested itself to his ambition. What loyalty can exist towards a Pasha? what patriotism in a Pashalic? The down-trodden and degraded Egyptian not only has never known another state of rule, but he has never felt the want of it; and herein is at once an element of strength and weakness in Mehemet Ali's position. The yielding soil afforded no resistance to the planting of his power, but at the same time it wanted all tenacity to retain, or enable it to take root. And now the Pasha's days must needs be drawing to a close; his son Ibrahim's life is little better, owing to his sensuality and intemperance; Seyd Pasha, though kindly disposed, is deficient in genius, if not in intellect. The character of Abbas Pasha, the only other member of his family arrived at man's estate, affords little to hope, and everything to fear. And what is ultimately to become of Egypt? Is the Porte once more to extend its baleful authority over this unhappy country, with all the withering influence which it never ceases to exercise? Shall we replace the effete and fanatical creatures of the seraglio in the province which be-

came a kingdom through their imbecility; and allow them to interrupt our commerce here, as they were so long permitted to arrest the building of our church at Jerusalem? — Heaven forbid!

For the natural history of Egypt, its Canals, Statistics, Commerce, and the route to India, the reader is referred to the Appendix.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LEVANT — BEYROUT.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee,
Greece, Egypt, Tyre, Assyria — where are they?
Thy waters wasted them when they were free,
And many a tyrant since. They now obey
The stranger, slave or savage: — their decay
Has dried up realms to nations — not so thou;
Unchangeable, save to thy wild waves' play;
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now!

Childe Harold.

The "Levant" of the Italians, the "Orient" of the French, the "Morgenland" of the Germans, and the "Eōthen" of Kinglake, are paraphrases of the "East." The former term is applied not only to the seas, but to the shores, over which the sun *rises* to the morningward of Malta. Bright and blue as it is, and fringed by the fairest and most memorial shores, it is yet a very lonely sea: wild winds that are almost typhoons sweep over it; iron coasts wrap it round: and, south of Cerigo, there is not a safe harbour in all its wide expanse, save that of Alexandria.

The commerce of the early world found shelter in the ports of Tyre, Sidon, Acre, and other harbours, only fit for modern small craft, such as that

of Scanderoon. These are now filled with the ruins of the palaces that once overshadowed them; or closed up by ancient sands that might have run from the glass of old Time himself.

The Levantine sea is seldom without a swell; and the wind, like a young child, is generally either troublesome or asleep; long calms, or changing, gusty breezes, render steamers especially valuable in these waters: and to their instrumentality was chiefly owing the success, so bold, rapid, and decisive, of our late naval operations on the coast of Syria; the paucity of passengers, however, and the decrease of trade between Egypt and Syria, have obliged the steamers to give way to a sailing-packet between Alexandria and Beyrout.*

I visited the admiral's flag-ship, and some other Egyptian men-of-war, and then pulled alongside the English schooner that was about to sail for Beyrout. She was in quarantine, as had been her case I believe for years, with the exception of a very few occasional days. Alexandria and Beyrout mutually vex one another with this restraint upon communication, more for political than sanatory reasons; and, as this luckless packet has two trips to make in each month, it may be supposed she is scarcely

* The Oriental Steam Packet Company have now placed a steamer on this station — an important event to travellers.

clear of one fortnight's quarantine, when she incurs another. How human nature can endure this perpetual imprisonment, under a broiling sun, in a coop of twenty feet wide, it is difficult to conceive. There is, moreover, almost always a swell at Alexandria, and generally a heavy sea at Beyrout, so that, even when at anchor, the little craft has as little rest as freedom. Yet her crew seemed as healthy and contented, and her officers as gentlemanly and good-tempered, as if she were the tranquil flag-ship at Portsmouth.

The Blue-Peter was flying on board this restless bark, and the English mails transferred from the Oriental steamer, when I hurried on board with my voluminous luggage. A man accustomed only to travel about England, with his couple of portmanteaus and a dressing-case, has little idea of the appurtenances of an Oriental traveller. There are no hotels by the wayside on *his* journey: the natives never travel except from dire necessity, and then seldom change their clothes until arrived at their destination: when night comes on, they lie down to sleep in the open air, or in some filthy khan. An Englishman, therefore, with any regard to cleanliness or comfort, is obliged to travel with an assortment of goods like those of an upholsterer, comprising every article his various exigencies may require, from a tent to a toasting-fork. He must have

bed, bedding, and dressing-room; a pantry, scullery, kitchen, and bakehouse, dangling on his camels: saddle, bridle, and water-bottles, arms of all kinds, carpets, mats, and lanterns; besides a wardrobe that would serve for a green-room, containing all sorts of garments, from the British uniform to the Syrian turban, the Arab's kefieh, and the Greek capote. All these articles loaded a large boat to the water's edge, and took some time to transfer to the little packet, that lay pitching and straining at her anchor like an impatient steed that paws the ground.

After months of indolent life in sultry Egypt, among screaming Arabs or jabbering dragomans, to rush away over the lively waves, and hear English voices, and watch the steady conduct of English sailors, is a most pleasant change. It was blowing very fresh as we ran out to sea, under a close-reefed mainsail, but the sun shone brightly, and the waves were of the purple colour that they wore to Homer's eyes; their foam flew from them in rainbow fragments, and the gallant little craft darted from wave to wave like the joyous seabirds that flew around her. Now she hovers for a moment on the watery precipice, now flings herself into the bosom of old Neptune, whose next throb sends her aloft again into the golden sunshine and the diamond spray, till the merry gale catches her drapery, and she plunges once more into the watery valleys as if

at hide and seek with her invisible playfellow, the wind.

Our passengers consisted of two English officers, a Swiss merchant, and two Italian travellers; these, with the captain and lieutenant, made quite a crowd in the little cabin. They were all pleasant fellows, and our voyage savoured more of a cruise in a yacht than a passage in a packet. We newer saw a sail, or caught sight of land, but now and then we had a glimpse of a dolphin, several flying-fish fluttered on board with their iridescent wings, and lay panting, but apparently quite contented, on the deck.

On the fourth morning, the coast of Syria rose over the horizon; and the clearness of the atmosphere, together with the speed of our yacht bounding before a southerly gale, made the magnificent panorama of the Lebanon start into sight, and develope its complicated beauty, as if by magic. At sunrise, a faint wavy line announced our approach to land; at noon, we seemed in the very shadows of its mountains, and those mountains looked down upon the Holy Land!

For 1800 years, the Western world, in all its prosperous life and youthful energy, has looked with reverence and hope towards that hopeless and stricken but yet honoured Land. After ages of obscurity and oblivion as a mere province of a fallen empire,

that country suddenly became invested with a glory till then unknown to earth. A few poor fishermen went forth from those shores among the nations, and announced such tidings as changed their destiny for ever. Human life became an altered state; new motives, sympathies, and principles arose, new humanities became developed; new hopes, no longer bounded by, but enlarging from the grave, animated our race. God had been amongst us, and spoken to us, as brethren, of our glorius inheritance.

It was natural, perhaps, that this bright hope and faith should degenerate into enthusiasm — the means were confounded with the end; the land of Palestine became, as it were, a geographical object of idolatry, and pilgrims rushed to its shores in countless multitudes, in the hope of laying down the burden of their sins upon its sacred soil.

The spirit of all Europe was warlike then; sometimes vainly struggling at home in instinctive endeavours to arrive at freedom; sometimes expatiating in any vague enterprise that promised exercise for its restless energy. The summons of the hermit Peter turned this spirit into a new channel, and the Cross became the emblem of devotion in the cause of chivalry, as well as of religion. That summons rent asunder every tie of love, and home, and interest: the warriors of England, France, and Austria, no longer knew a patriotism but for Pa-

lestine: no interest but for the Holy Sepulchre; no love but that of glory. Then rolled for centuries the tide of war from Europe upon Asia, baffled and beaten back, or perishing there fruitlessly like the rivers in its deserts, men learned at length that not by human means was glory to be restored to Palestine: its prosperity seemed still reserved into far times for the Children of the Promise. The Crescent shone triumphantly over Calvary, and taught the Christian that his faith was to be spiritual — its inspiration no longer to be sought on earth.

This Holy Land, although no longer an object of bloody ambition, has lost none of the deep interest with which it once inspired the most vehement crusader. The first impressions of childhood are connected with that scenery; and infant lips in England's prosperous homes pronounce with reverence the names of forlorn Jerusalem and Galilee. We still experience a sort of patriotism for Palestine, and feel that the scenes enacted here were performed for the whole family of man. Narrow as are its boundaries, we have all a share in the possession: what a church is to a city, Palestine is to the world.

Phœnician fleets once covered these silent waters; wealthy cities once fringed those lonely shores; and, during three thousand years, War has led all the

nations of the earth in terrible procession along those historic plains. Yet it is not mere history that thrills the pilgrim to the Holy Land with such feelings as no other spot on the wide earth inspires; but the belief that on yonder earth the Creator once trod with human feet, bowed down with human suffering, linked to humanity by the divinest sympathy — that of sorrow; bedewing our tombs with his tears, and consecrating our world with his blood. Such thoughts will influence the most thoughtless traveller on his first view of Palestine, and convert the most reckless wanderer into a pilgrim for the time: even the infidel, in his lonely and desecrated heart, must feel a reverence for the *human* character of one who lived and died like Him of Nazareth.

And now we can recognise Sidon and Tyre: now the Pine Forest, and the garden-covered promontory; and now we open the city of Beyrout, with its groves and dismantled towers, and the magnificent scenery that surrounds it. All reveries and abstractions speedily gave way to practical considerations the moment the anchor plunged into the water, and the sails came fluttering down. An officer from the Board of Health announced a quarantine of twelve days, but permitted us to take a cottage for ourselves, apart from the lazaretto. Here we were to be watched and guarded, like so many felons; yet still it was a reprieve from that great pest-house,

the lazaretto, whose melancholy inmates we could see wandering to and fro upon their narrow rock.

The next day we landed, and took possession of our cottage, which was prettily situated in a mulberry-grove; my two countrymen shared my quarters; while the Italians and the Swiss took possession of a terrace on which they pitched their tent (with a hen-house in which they slept,) on the top of a cottage about a hundred yards from ours.

The first sensation of change, from the incessant pitching of the schooner to the repose of shore, was very agreeable; from the perpetual glare of the sun-stricken sea, to the soft green of the mulberry-groves; and from our monotonous life on board to all the gay variety of Syrian scenery and its picturesque people.

Our cottage prison consists of a large apartment open to the north; from this, branch off three sleeping apartments and a kitchen; and over all are terraces of various altitudes, commanding splendid views of the city and the bay. The only article of furniture on the premises when we took possession was a plank which served for a sofa near the window, in front of which was a little gallipot garden, that presented the only verdure within our reach: this specimen of horticulture was tended with care by each successive prisoner, who found in every weedy

plant that it contained a Picciola. For the rest, our comforts were but few, even when we had nominally furnished our apartments from the city: my pallet was laid on the cold stone floor, and there was no glass to the windows, through which the noonday sun and the midnight blast came pouring in unchecked.

Being laid up with a severe wound, I bore our quarantine with great philosophy, and was never weary of contemplating the novel scene of busy Syrian life around me. A large family occupied the lower part of our premises; and the small courtyard into which our window looked was busy with all the little domestic incidents of daily life, in which I soon took as much interest as if I had been one of the family. I sympathized with the changes of weather that affected the operations of the silkworms; I grieved for the illness of the little child; I took as much interest in the attentions paid by the young Syrian swains to Katarin and Dudu as they did themselves; and a baking or a washing-day appeared to me full of importance.

There was an old Maronite lady, with a costume as indistinguishable in its various wrappings as were her features in their wrinkles. She had three daughters, the eldest of whom was married to the man who farmed the orchard and the groves. This

dame was very handsome and industrious, moreover, and, while she carried a sprawling, merry little imp at her open bosom, she was perpetually spinning silk on a spindle, and superintending the economy of her household. Her two sisters were also very handsome; indeed, in my eyes, so long accustomed to Egypt's dusky faces, they seemed beautiful: their large dark eyes were full of expression, but had none of that sensational look so universal in Egypt, or the mournfulness of those of Nubia: their complexion was not so dark as that of a thorough-bred Italian, and there was a rich glow of health and freshness in their sun-coloured cheeks. The married women wore an extraordinary ornament that seems peculiar to them and to the unicorn, consisting of a horn from one to two feet in length, projecting from the upper forehead: this ornament (confined strictly to matrons) is made of tin or silver, according to the wealth of the wearer; it rests upon a pad, and is never taken off, even at night. At a little distance it gives a majestic and imposing character to the figure, and a veil hangs gracefully from it, which can be gathered round the shoulders, and enshrines the wearer as in a tent. The virgins wore their hair floating in exuberant curls over their shoulders: their dress is indescribable by male lips: all I can say of it is, that it is very graceful and pretty, and lavishly open at the bosom. The men, Christians

as well as Moslems, wore turbans, loose drawers tied at the knee, and silk waistcoats buttoned up to the neck. Over this was worn on Sundays and holydays, a large, loose robe, which gave to groups a very picturesque, as to individuals a very dignified appearance. I shall speak of the occupations of this Syrian family as a type of most others.

The household was astir at the first light; Eleesa, the comely matron, first gave liberty to the denizens of her poultry-yard, and then opened and shut more doors than I thought a village of such houses could contain. Then she called her pretty sisters, who seemed always loath to leave their beds: and then the screaming of children, the crowing of cocks, the lowing of cattle, and the woman-talk that ceased not thenceforth, announce that the day is fairly begun. Michaele is ingeniously ploughing the ground between the mulberry-trees with a beautiful little pair of milk-white oxen; Katarin and Dudu are picking mulberry-leaves for the silk-worms; the old woman is crooning a low song, as she sits and spins in the early sunshine; and the little children are lisping Arabic requests for bon-bons and backsheesh; a wayfarer diverges from the path to light his pipe, and refolds his turban as he recounts the news; then succeed other visitors, and all seem welcome, and all squat on the ground, and none derange the business that is going on. About

noon, the family assembles for a repast of bread and clotted milk, and cucumbers and celery, and some sort of thin soup redolent of tomatos: and then they loiter about in the pleasant shade, and laugh, and enjoy the mere consciousness of living; and the matron smokes her nargileh,* and the man his chibouque, and then they disperse again to their light labours, until sunset restores them to their leisure and their supper. Then come some men of various ages, and gaily-dressed girls from the city, each sex arriving apart, and only joining company in presence of their mutual friends; or a priest perhaps pays a friendly visit with his dark robes and black turban; and the simple and social people continue in animated talk until the muezzin's call from the minarets announces the hour of prayer to the Moslem, and of retirement to these Christians.

Our quarantine lasted fourteen days, after which the surgeon of the Lazaretto and some health-officers came to inspect us, and declared us free. I confess I was almost sorry to leave our cottage and my fair friends below, with and without horns; yet, as I stepped into the boat which was to transport me across the bay, I felt the elasticity of restored freedom compensate for everything, even for its privation. Merrily we swept across that beautiful bay. The picturesque town sent forth its voices

* Water-pipe.

faintly on the water; boats shot backwards and forwards to the shipping, pulled by turbaned and bearded men; and, here and there, a solitary fisherman exercising his silent but absorbing skill upon parrot-coloured fish.

We landed about a mile beyond the town, on some rocks that were nearly level with the tideless sea, and showed numerous traces of the ancient city of Berytus. I had taken apartments in a house belonging to a Maltese, named Antonio Bianchi, whose *present* establishment I can safely recommend to travellers. He then lived in an old-fashioned Syrian house, surrounded by mulberry gardens, which were intersected by paths fenced off by impenetrable barriers of the cactus, or Indian fig. This plant abounds everywhere, and not only protects but shadows all the lanes, commonly attaining to the height of twelve or eighteen feet.

After a few days' residence with Bianchi, I removed to a cottage nearer to the sea, and farther from the town. It belonged to Antonio Tremseni, a Maltese, who had once been waiter at the Travellers' Club, in London, and who now conducted my simple ménage with as much neatness and elegance as if my dining-room looked out upon Pall Mall. Far different, however, was the view: that which I now beheld is perhaps the finest in the world.

Come out to the terrace, whereon a tent is pitched, and rest upon soft carpets in its shade; while Tremseni lights your chibouque, and Raswan offers you a cup of Mocha coffee perfumed with ambergris.

Now we can contemplate the prospect in pleasant leisure, whilst our eye ranges like an eagle over earth, and sea, and sky.

From the rich gardens all round us rise numbers of cottages; and, as the sun is low, their gaily dressed inhabitants come forth on the flat roofs to breathe the cool breezes, and enjoy their pipes and coffee. There is a joyous, an almost festive look in all around us; the acacia blossoms are dancing in the breeze, the palms are waving salutations; and the flowers are flirting with one another in blushes and perfumed whisperings: the faint plash of the wave is echoed from the rocks; the hum of the distant city is broken by the rattle of the drum, and pierced by the fife with its wild Turkish music: flocks of pigeons rustle through the air, and to their cooing the woodpecker keeps time like a castanet, while the sea-birds scream an occasional accompaniment.

To the north, the Mediterranean spreads away to the horizon, blue and unbroken as the heavens that overarch it; and its bosom, too, is varied with its own light clouds of foam. Beneath us, in the

offing, a proud English frigate and some French and Austrian men-of-war lie at anchor, dark and grim, like watch-dogs over the white-sailed flock of merchantmen, that lie nearer to the shore. The bay is bordered to the right by the magnificent array of the Lebanon mountains, rising from the sea, in which their various hills, glens, and even crag-perched villages, are reflected. Each of those acclivities has a little tract of richly-coloured vegetation hanging from its shoulders like a tartan cloak, and wears a fortress for its crown: from the golden sands below, to the snowy tracts above, the Druse and Maronite districts may be traced as on a map. Nearer, and in front of us, appears the thin smoke of the city, surrounded by such of the picturesquely-ruined castles and fortifications as the British artillery has spared: encampments of green and yellow tents speck the ground at intervals amongst the groves. The consular flags of Europe are gaily fluttering over the flat-roofed town within, whose monotony is diversified with tower, and mosque, and minaret. Around us, upon gentle slopes, and many terraces, are groves of the fig-tree, the ilex, and the sycamore. Here and there, a small palm-tree waves its plumy head; hedges of flowering cactus, with their fat, fantastic leaves, enclose gardens of small mulberry and pomegranate trees, olives, melons, and cucumbers. The water's edge flings a creamy foam

upon black rocks, frequently showing traces of edifices of the ancient city that have long since crumbled into gravel. And over all this is spread a chameleon sky, shot with every conceivable colour, that seems as if Iris were weaving some gorgeous canopy for sunset, so rapidly do the colours, which are her web and woof, come and go.

About this time, I was agreeably surprised by a visit from Prince K., whom I had met in the Tombs of Thebes. He was knocked up by his journey, and I was still unable to ride; so I took him in my boat to the "Nahr el Kelb," or Dog River; a stream that issues from a pisturesque ravine about nine miles from Beyrout, on the road to Tripoli. The sea ran high, and the wind was as much as our little craft could stagger under as we ran along in the shadow of the Lebanon. On rounding a bold headland, a new scene disclosed itself: a deep valley opened in the very heart of the mountains, and from its green and pleasant gloom the bright little river we were in search of gleamed suddenly into light; the steep hills that formed its banks were covered with dark shrubs below and grey crags above, and crowned with a Maronite convent. A beautiful ruined aqueduct, tapestried with ivy and flowering parasites, ran along the base of the mountain; and a picturesque old bridge, shaped like a chevron, terminated the view; on the shore stood a khan,

that rather resembled a bower, so thickly was it covered with vines and shaded by trees.

The entrance to this fairy spot was guarded from the angry sea by masses of black rocks, which have given name to the Dog River: the heavy surf beat out its purple masses into broad sheets of foam upon the beach, and there appeared to be no possibility of entering that secluded glen. For a few moments we lay-to, waiting for a "seventh wave;" then out flew the oars, and, bowered in spray, upheaved upon a mountain-billow, we bounded over the bar — floating by a sudden and strange transition into the calm river out of the stormy sea.

We found here some officers of the Vernon, who had ridden round to meet us; their carpet was spread under the shade of spreading sycamores, and we were soon reposing upon it in placid enjoyment of our chibouques, while the Syrian servants bustled about, making preparation for the banquet. The horses were tethered in the shade, and our little boat lay moored by the silvery beach, over which a mountain cascade skipped, and laughed in concert with ourselves.

We dined merrily together on kid from the mountain, and omelettes made with herbs that grew wild about us; the wine was cooled in the cascade, and the coffee mingled its pleasant perfume with that of the aromatic shrubs on which it was boiling.

Pipes, coffee, mountain-breezes, wild flowers' scents, superb scenery, sparkling torrents, neighing horses, the sea's deep roar, and a joyous party, made us think that the monks of the neighbouring convent might have pleasant times of it, after all, notwithstanding this Eden of theirs was Eveless.

This was the site of the ancient Lycopolis, or Wolf-city: there are few or no remains of it except the aqueduct, and the name, degenerated as it is, into its canine appellation. On the rocks, however, that line the steep pathway, are some very curious figures and inscriptions, purporting that the warlike array of the Egyptians, Persians, and Romans, had in their turn passed by: Sesostris, Cambyses, and Aurelian, had been before us.

Another day, I went to dine at some distance from Beyrout, with a British officer of distinguished birth and gallantry, who has married a Maronite lady of great beauty, and settled in her country. After an hour's gallop over the rocky promontory on which Beyrout is situated, through lanes of cactus and gardens alternating with sandy tracts and groups of pine-trees, I arrived at a picturesque cottage, commanding a noble view of the Lebanon. I was sitting on the divan with my courteous host, smoking our chibouques, and talking about England, when his bride entered, dressed in her beautiful Arabian costume and still more beautiful smiles: I

no longer wondered that he had abandoned his career, fame, fortune — every thing — in such a cause. After dinner, which was dressed and served in Arab style, we adjourned to take our pipe and coffee on the house-top, where we passed a most pleasant hour.

The sun was setting in great glory on the sea, bathing the Lebanon in a flood of golden light like that of Raphael's Transfiguration. On each side of the peninsula on which we stood, two fine bays swept gracefully away to the right and left, till the eye reached Tripoli on the north, and Tyre on the south. Every glance flung over that sacred region brought back a thousand associations that might have suited well with such an hour, but the beautiful Present absorbed the Past, and we had then no thought but for what fell upon the eye or ear. The soft evening hour had brought out each Syrian family to their house-tops, and the gardens round were thickly inhabited; from every terraced roof rose the faint clouds of the chibouque; blue, red, and purple dresses glittered on every group that was gathered round us, with the veil-enfolded horns of the matrons, or the black tresses of the maidens sparkling with golden coins. And the music of merry voices was heard from far and near, with sometimes a strain of song, or the tinkle of a guitar; the sea made its own solemn music on the distant shore, and the

whole scene was one of perfect harmony, and peace, and beauty.

At Beyrout, however happily situated, I was only on the borders of the Holy Land, and considered every day lost that was deducted from my progress in the interior. On the 26th of May, I started for Jerusalem. It is the invariable practice in the East to make but a short journey the first day, encamping near the city, in order to supply the omission of any of the voluminous requisites of a style of travelling in which you carry your hotel with you. Being in light marching order, my little caravan consisted only of two luggage horses, besides my own animals: on one of these rode the muleteer with a faggot of pistols and daggers stuck in his capacious belt: his costume consisted of a red cap wrapped round with a Damascus shawl, a pair of petticoat trowsers, red slippers, and a faded jacket covered with still more faded embroidery. The first horse carried the tent on one side, the canteen and cooking-apparatus on the other, and some portmanteaus in the middle: the second was covered with mats, cloaks, carpets, leathern water-bottles, and Yussef, the muleteer. My servant, a young Syrian Christian, was very handsome and dandified in proportion, with a dress resembling that of the muleteer, only of more elegant fashion and gaudier colours: he carried a brace of pistols

on the high pommel of his Turkish saddle, a formidable sabre by his side, and my gun slung over his shoulder. A spare turban for great occasions, and a change of such linen as he could carry in his pocket, were his only luggage, besides those unfailing concomitants, arms and a water-bottle. These men were my only companions for many weeks upon the road, except when a timid merchant or a wild Bedouin joined suspicious company for a mile or two, or a khan afforded a gossip and coffee for half an hour. I must not omit to mention, in the list of my companions, a docile Arab horse, the most useful, indefatigable, and only uncomplaining one amongst them all: I purchased him soon after my arrival in Syria; he had become as familiar as a dog during my stay at Beyrout, and when I was obliged to leave him invalided at Jerusalem, I felt as if I was parting with a tried old friend. All the other horses were hired, and their forage provided by their owner, who generally made use of whatever fields we happened to encamp near for the purpose. He was a patient, good-tempered fellow, and preserved that character for strict honesty so peculiar to his class, amongst a nation of thieves. It is a curious principle in human nature, that men are generally more true to their collective than to their individual responsibility. Remove a disorderly soldier to a well-disciplined regiment, and he becomes

exemplary — convert a gossiping Venetian into a gondolier, and he becomes discreet — promote a thievish Arab into a muleteer's place, and he will straightway become an honest man.

Our way led along a narrow pathway, bordering on the sea as far as Beyrout, which we entered under a fortified gate where Turkish sentries were posted. The town itself is a confused labyrinth of lanes and alleys, that sometimes expand into a market-place, or at least some space wide enough to afford passage for two abreast. Towards the sea there are several cafés open in front, filled with sailors, Arnaouts, Turks, and a few Syrians of the lower classes. There are also some mercantile houses here, whose clerks, bales of merchandize, and hand-barrows, impart something of an European air to the quays. The streets are steep and ill-paved, or covered with flags, that afford uncertain footing even to an Arab horse. A strong-looking wall with battlements surrounds the town, and about 10,000 inhabitants.

Beyrout is situated on the isthmus of a finely-undulated promontory: and, in the valley that lies between that promontory and the mountains, spreads one of the richest and most varied tracts of verdure in the world. Gardens, groves, the gleams of a winding river, white cottages half covered by creeping shrubs, lanes of flowering cactus, alternating

tracts of yellow sands, and clumps of pine-trees, afford a delightful range for the searching eye; while the sea terminates each vista to the north and south, and the Lebanon towers grandly to the east. To the west, as we pass along this valley, are visible the houses of the resident Franks, who add the comforts of the West to the picturesqueness and luxury of the East. Their galleries are open towards the mountain, and giaours though they be, they are often to be seen quite quietly sitting in their verandahs, or reposing on their terraces, enjoying the fragrant weed that intensifies their perception of the beauty of their splendid view.

After proceeding for some time through a narrow lane, with hedges of thickly-clotted cactus, we emerged into the romantic pine-forest about which Lamartine has written such pretty rhapsodies. An open space of bright soft sand shoots pathways in every direction through the shade, whose pleasant gloom soon terminates their vistas. At the foot of each old tree is a little circular carpet of verdure, looking at a distance like the shadow of its pine; the majestic groves of older growth, intermingled with the tender green of the young plantations, canopy the whole region around with a various and chequered shade. The caravans pass along noiselessly on the soft verdure or the yielding sand; not a sound is heard but

that of the far-off sea, and the faint rustle of the branches. Through the deep foliage, a view of the impending Lebanon occasionally breaks, and cool breezes, that seem to have their home here, wander inquisitively about in each natural bower and shady nook. The glades, and banks, and pathways, and arenas, present the very scene that Romance would select for the warrior's or the lover's delectation — for "passages of arms" or of poetry.

About an hour from the city (we measure distance here by time), you pull up at a pretty khan, where a trough of water quenches your horses glowing nostrils, and you can ask your way and light your pipe.* Thence by sandy paths or rocky tracks, through two or three flat-roofed villages, whose inhabitants sit spinning silk in the shade of rustic colonnades; and then we reach the shore, bordered by thick jungle, or rocky steeps. As the sun went down, we came to the river Damour, and encamped there for the night; our own tent and fire,

* These khans afford a mere temporary shelter to travellers in this part of Syria, while in the south-east, and in Egypt, they are of immense extent, and form receptacles for whole caravans, that bring thither their own forage and provisions. In the latter case, they are frequently called "caravanserai" — "serai," or seraglio, meaning a *palace* or *large house*. In the former instance, of which I speak here, the khan is a sort of public-house, which generally supplies barley for horses; and pipes, coffee, sour milk, and water-melons for their riders. They are scattered along the road at about half-days' journeys, or from ten to fifteen miles apart.

and the stream that ran at our feet, supplying all our wants.

The next morning, as the sun rose over the Lebanon, we forded the river Damour, which runs into the sea from a beautiful valley among banks and islands thickly strewn with oleander. In about two hours I halted under the shade of a sycamore, to wait for some officers of the Vernon, who had promised to accompany me as far as Djouni, on my Jerusalem way. Near us was a khan, whence we procured barley and water for our horses, and eggs, milk, and fire for our cooking: mats and carpets were spread in the shade; maccaroni and coffee boiling on a fire of dried branches; and our horses feeding under the shelter of some olives — when a cheer was heard, and four sailors were seen galloping along the shore, impatient to rally round the fire whose smoke above the trees announced its friendly offices beneath. Ample justice being done to the banquet, we were soon in the saddle once more, and sweeping along over hill and vale, and rock, and sandy bay, until we came in sight of the venerable city of Sidon. Thence we turned off to the left towards the mountains, through mulberry and olive groves; passing by a pretty hamlet, and then along the banks of a river spanned with antique bridges, and overhung with pleasant shade.

The road, winding sometimes along a deep ra-

vine, sometimes over a mountain's brow, was nothing but a steep and rocky path, which in England a goat alone could be expected to travel. Our horses, however, went along it at a canter, though the precipice sometimes yawned beneath our outside stirrup, while the inner one knocked fire out of the rocky cliff, and the ground not unfrequently gave way the moment the hoof had left it, and plunged into the chasm far below.

The views were fine and various: deep, rich valleys, sprinked occasionally with a flat-roofed cottage, a vine-yard, or a mill; a capricious stream, gliding or rushing along under its oleander shade; steep hills, speckled with grey crags, or overgrown with the bay-tree and the myrtle; here and there, a town, with a very fortress-look, crowned some steep acclivity; or a wood of sycamores gloomed over the pale rocks.

It was late when we came in sight of two high conical hills on one of which stands the village of Djouni, on the other, a circular wall, over which dark trees were waving; and this was the place in which Lady Hester Stanhope had finished her strange and eventful career. It had formerly been a convent, but the Pasha of Sidon had given it to the "prophet-lady," who converted its naked walls into a palace, and its wilderness into gardens.

The sun was setting as we entered the enclosure, and we were soon scattered about the outer court, picketting our horses, rubbing down their foaming flanks, and washing out their wounds. The buildings that constituted the palace were of a very scattered and complicated description, covering a wide space, but only one story in height: courts and gardens, stables and sleeping-rooms, halls of audience and ladies' bowers, were strangely intermingled. Heavy weeds were growing everywhere among the open portals, and we forced our way with difficulty through a tangle of roses and jasmine to the inner court; here, choice flowers once bloomed, and fountains played in marble basins; but now was presented a scene of the most melancholy desolation. As the watch-fire blazed up, its gleam fell upon masses of honeysuckle and woodbine; on white, mouldering walls beneath, and dark, waving trees above; while the group of mountaineers who gathered round its light, with their long beards and vivid dresses completed the strange picture.

The clang of sword and spear resounded through the long galleries; horses neighed among bowers and boudoirs; strange figures hurried to and fro among the colonnades, shouting in Arabic, English, and Italian; the fire crackled, the startled bats flapped their heavy wings, and the growl of distant thunder filled up the pauses in the rough symphony.

Our dinner was spread on the floor in Lady Hester's favourite apartment; her death-bed was our sideboard, her furniture our fuel, her name our conversation. Almost before the meal was ended, two of our party had dropped asleep over their trenchers from fatigue: the Druses had retired from the haunted precincts to their village, and W—, L—, and I went out into the garden to smoke our pipes by Lady Hester's lonely tomb. About midnight we fell asleep upon the ground, wrapped in our capotes; and dreamed of ladies, and tombs, and prophets, till the neighing of our horses announced the dawn.

After a hurried breakfast on fragments of the last night's repast, we strolled out over the extensive gardens. Here many a broken arbour and trellis, bending under masses of jasmine and honeysuckle, show the care and taste that were once lavished on this wild but beautiful hermitage! a garden-house, surrounded by an enclosure of roses run wild, lies in the midst of a grove of myrtle and bay-trees. This was Lady Hester's favourite resort during her lifetime; and now, within its silent enclosure,

"After Life's fitful fever, she sleeps well."

The hand of Ruin has dealt very sparingly with all these interesting relics; the Pasha's power by day, and the fear of spirits by night, keep off marauders; and, though *we* made free with broken benches and

fallen doorposts for fuel, we reverently abstained from displacing anything in the establishment, except a few roses, which there was no living thing but bees and nightingales to regret. It was one of the most striking and interesting spots I ever witnessed: its silence and beauty, its richness and desolation, lent to it a touching and mysterious character that suited well the memory of that strange hermit-lady who has made it a place of pilgrimage, even in Palestine.*

The Pasha of Sidon presented Lady Hester with the deserted convent of Mar Elias on her arrival in his country, and this she soon converted into a fortress, garrisoned by a band of Albanians: her only attendants besides were, her doctor, her secretary, and some female slaves. Public rumour soon busied itself with such a personage, and exaggerated her influence and power. It is even said that she was crowned Queen of the East at Palmyra by 50,000 Arabs. She certainly exercised almost despotic power

* While Lady Hester Stanhope lived, although numbers visited the convent, she almost invariably refused admittance to strangers. She assigned as a reason the use which M. de Lamartine had made of his interview. Mrs. T., who passed some weeks at Djouni, told me, that, when Lady Hester read his account of this interview, she exclaimed, "It is all false; we did not converse together for more than five minutes; but, no matter — no traveller hereafter shall betray or forge my conversations." The author of *Eöthen*, however, was her guest, and has given an interesting account of his visit in his brilliant volume.

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THE CRESCENT AND THE CROSS;

OR,

ROMANCE AND REALITIES

OF

EASTERN TRAVEL.

BY

ELIOT WARBURTON.

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THE CRESCENT AND THE CROSS.

VOL. II.

CHAPTER I.

SIDON, TYRE, AND ACRE.

We wandered on to many a shrine,
By faith or ages made divine;
And then we visited each place
Where valour's deeds had left a trace;
Or sought the spots renowned no less
For Nature's lasting loveliness.

The Troubadour, by L. E. L.

The road down the mountain was full of interest, and on reaching the plain we found a path that lay along the banks of a sparkling river, leading us out upon a finely curved and yellow-sanded shore. We galloped along these sands for several miles, and then entered Sidon, through a guardhouse and covered way filled with Turkish soldiers. We passed several groups along the shore that would each have made a highly-coloured painting: those who have been struck by the picturesqueness of gipsy encampments in England may fancy the amusement a wayfarer continually finds in a country where such life

is universal; but, in the latter, the long beards of the Moslem, the gay colours of their dresses, and the trousered women, with their various veils and turbans, infinitely diversify the groups.

Sidon is as irregularly built, and has streets as narrow, and as much varied by bazaars, cafés, and stables, as the other Oriental towns I have endeavoured to describe. Its fortifications offered considerable resistance to the Anglo-Austrian-Turkish army in the late siege: the Archduke Ferdinand was the first to enter the breach when effected on the land side; the attack was well supported by the fire of the British fleet.

There are some remains of Fakreddin's palace, standing out into the sea, and only connected with the town by a long and narrow bridge: into this palace a body of Turkish troops had been thrown, but they hesitated to cross the bridge, swept as it was by the fire of the Egyptian troops. A mate on board one of the English steamers, named Cummins, observed their hesitation, and entreated permission from his commanding officer to land and lead them: this was granted with some difficulty: the young sailor pulled to the palace in the dingey, leaped ashore, and called on the Turks with a cheer to follow him. He sprang upon the bridge under a shower of balls, and was half way across it before his infidel allies dared to support him: they came

on then with the bayonet, and the western town was won. This was told to me by Maquire, one of the officers of the Vernon, who was riding by my side; he omitted to mention that his own forehead had been laid open by a bullet while gallantly leading another attack on the same place.

Sidon is called Saida in the language of the country. It contains about 7000 inhabitants, the greater number of whom are Moslems, the remainder Jews, Maronites, and Greek Christians. Until the time of Fakreddin, it had a good port, but that Emir filled all the harbours along the coast in order to prevent the Sultan's fleets from anchoring here, when he revolted from his authority. The citadel is said to have been built by Louis XI., and commands a fine view of the orchards and gardens, diversified with countryhouses, that ornament the environs. The principal trade of the town, consisting of silk, cotton, and nutgalls, has been transferred of late years to Beyrout.

This is the most ancient city of Phœnicia: mention is made of it in the Pentateuch and Homer: it was assigned to the tribe of Asher, in the division of the Promised Land by Joshua, but never was subdued by the Israelites. For wealth, commerce, luxury, vice, and power, it was unequalled in the Levant, until Tyre outstripped it, and Salmanezer conquered it. Thence it passed

successively under the rule of the Persians, Macedonians, Syrians, Egyptians, Romans, Arabs, and Crusaders. It was an opulent city at the time when Christ visited its territory: it sent a bishop to the council of Nice in 325. Its destruction was accomplished by Melek Adel, the brother of Saladin, in 1197; afterwards it partially recovered at intervals, to be as often destroyed.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Fakreddin restored it to considerable importance, and rendered it the seaport of Damascus, whence it is distant only three days' journey: after this, it became almost a colony of the French, but they were driven out by Djezzar Pasha in 1791, and, since then, European vessels seldom approached its dangerous coast.*

Early on the 29th of May, I started for Tyre, which, seated on a peninsula, soon became visible from the coast along which I rode. The way was profoundly lonely: I did not meet a living creature throughout the day, except some Syrian girls who drew water for me at a well near Sidon. As evening closed in, I found myself on a wide, solitary plain, diversified only by a dark and almost stagnant river:** heavy clouds were hanging on the

* Robinson, vol. ii. p. 416.

** This is the Liettāni, the Leontes of ancient times, which waters the vale of Baalbec.

horizon, thunder muttered ominously among the distant hills, bull-frogs were croaking harshly on the banks — the whole scene wore an aspect of utter desolation. Fording the stream where it reached my saddle-bow, I spurred on to the ruins of a Saracenic castle commanding the passage of the river, and, entering under a low, vaulted passage, found myself in the courtyard of a ruin that seemed a capital specimen of a robber's haunt: dark caverns and gloomy vaults appeared in every direction; the old walls of the donjon towered over my head, and there was probably no one living outside its walls for ten miles round: the appearance of two armed Arabs whom I found here was as little prepossessing as the aspect of the place, but it was too late to be fastidious. I flung the rein of my horse to one of the strangers to be led about, and, ordering the other to make a fire instantly, I sat down upon a fallen column, and lighted my pipe. The assumption of authority generally confers the possession of it in a country where every one is unknown to his neighbour: the Arabs looked at each other for a moment, then set about obeying the orders of their extempore tyrant; my horse was cool, and a cheerful fire blazing, when my servants arrived.

We kept watch by turns during the night, having shared our supper with the Arabs; they prowled

about all night; but the next morning I was cantering along the sands to Tyre, before the sun rose upon that ill-favoured castle. Passing the ruins of an aqueduct on the left, and some columns of granite on the right along the shore, I came to the isthmus by which Alexander connected the mainland with the island, in order to invest the city which then occupied the latter. The original Tyre seems to have been built upon the continent: it was founded by a Sidonian colony, 240 years before the building of Solomon's Temple, to which its king, Hiram, largely contributed. This city has dearly purchased its celebrity, having been besieged by Salmanezer, Nebuchadnezzar, and Alexander; Antigonus, the Romans, the Saracens and Crusaders; Egyptians, Turks, and — of course — by the English, the motto of whose artillery is "UBIQUE."

Tyre was visited by Christ and by St. Paul; it became a Christian bishopric in very early times. In the fourth century, Jerome speaks of it as the finest city in Phœnicia; and the Venetians held it for many years after the Crusades, partly restoring its character for commerce, wealth, and manufactures. I confess I was disappointed in its appearance. Its strength and beauty of position, and even its desolation, were less than I had expected: it is an ugly, little, matter-of-fact looking town, containing perhaps 5000 inhabitants, of the usual squalid but con-

tented, or rather resigned, appearance. The buildings occupy the northern side of the peninsula; on the southern side, it is true, there are some rocks lonely enough, if it were *very* early in the morning, for "fishermen to dry their nets upon;" but Ezekiel's prophecy was accomplished long ago.

As Palæ Tyrus was probably the only city in existence here at the time the prophecy was uttered, "that Tyre should be utterly destroyed and never rebuilt," it is evident that it could not allude to the present town, which has been rebuilt at least nine times. The former was probably called Palæ Tyrus only for distinction (after the modern town had risen); it is supposed to have occupied a space about a mile from the shore, where a steep rock marks the site of its ancient citadel.

Bounding the plain, there rises a bold range of hills, extending far into the sea, called formerly the "Promontorium Album." Surmounting this, we came in view of a wide and fertile plain, with the town and fortress of Acre in the distance, relieved off the heights of Mount Carmel, which terminated the seaward view. Descending from the mountain to his plain by a very steep and difficult path, called anciently "the ladder of Tyre," we traversed the plain for some hours: it was only partially cultivated, the greater part consisting of grassy tracts tufted with rushes, and occasionally sheltered by

groups of trees under which shepherds watched their flocks. A few villages were scattered widely apart, each with a large walled enclosure to protect their cattle at night from the foraging Bedouin.

As evening approached, the plain grew very lonely, though I met some shepherds anxiously hurrying their herds homeward: their country looked quite Arcadian, the evening was calm and beautiful, yet anxiety and fear were depicted in every countenance. We soon learned that there had been a battle on the plain the day before, and the people were hourly expecting a renewal of hostilities from the Bedouins who had been repulsed. One or two of these wild horsemen had passed me at a gallop, and I met several more in a body soon afterwards: they drew up along the path as I approached, but, though they did not offer the usual salutation, they permitted me to pass unquestioned. I then pulled up to wait for my servants, and, offering them some tobacco, entered into such conversation with them as I could maintain.

These fellows always appear on a journey as if they were going to war; and indeed these occupations are almost synonymous with tribes "whose hand is against every man's;" when they *do* go to war there is nothing in their outward appearance that displays any change from their most peaceful

guise. Their wild fierce eyes, and screaming voices, and vehement gestures, made them anything but agreeable company, especially at such an hour; and it was with no slight feeling of release I heard their "salaam," as I rode off to overtake my baggage-horses, which had now passed by.

As I rode towards Acre, I met many travellers, all armed to the teeth: they drew close together as I approached, although alone, for my people had gladly joined company with some other wayfarers: as they were in the enjoyment of security and society, I pushed on unattended towards the place of my destination. I soon overtook a Bedouin, who was splendidly mounted and seemed to welcome my arrival as a spectator of the prowess and beauty of his horse: the squalidness of his appearance contrasted curiously with the richness of his arms and the proud carriage of the animal he rode. Observing my admiration he dashed his sharp stirrups into his horse's flanks; flew forward, and wheeled round me at a gallop, whirling his tufted spear above his head with loud cries, and then pulling up short beside me. He was then in high good humour; he even praised *my* horse, and proceeded to eulogise the English and Ibrahim Pasha, who appears at present to be considered as the hero of the East. We were then in sight of Acre, and I asked him if he remembered our bombardment: suddenly his

countenance lighted up as if it reflected the magnificent explosion, and he exclaimed, "Ibrahim Pasha, taib, taib!" *(very good)* "pop! pop! pop!" — "Ingoleez,* taib kheteer" *(excellent)* — "hoo! Bombe!" and, so saying, he shot his lance high into the air, to illustrate the explosion as compared with the Egyptian's fusilade.

We now approached the encampment of his tribe, which he pointed out, and asked me to accompany him thither. I declined the tempting invitation, and soon afterwards reached Acre, where, they say, it will require ten years of labour to repair the effects of ten hours of English fire.

Ptolemais Acre, or, as the Syrians call it, Akka, is imposing-looking from the outside; but within, it is poor, dirty, and irregularly built. Some hundred Turkish soldiers and many impressed peasants were at work upon the fortifications: but there was little other appearance of activity or life within its silent streets.

Beyrout, Sidon, and Tyre, had been successively captured for the Turks by our squadron under Commodore Napier, almost as rapidly as he could cruize along the coast. On the 3rd November, 1840, Admiral Stopford was joined by the Commodore off Acre, and, a flag of truce being rejected, they went to work at once. The town was commanded and

* The English.

the artillery directed by Colonel Schultze, a Pole in Mehemet Ali's service: he was known in the Egyptian army as Youssef Aga, and had obtained considerable distinction in the Syrian war. He found the guns upon the fortifications very badly mounted; and, as the artillerymen were proportionately inefficient, he laid the guns himself so as to command the line of buoys placed at night by the British boats, concluding that they marked the stations which our ships were to occupy. Unfortunately for his plans, these buoys only marked the soundings — the path, and not the resting-places — of our gallant fleet. The powerful steam-frigates required no moorings: running in close under the walls, they took up their positions, and laid their guns with as much precision as so many batteries of horse-artillery; the rest of the squadron, separating into two divisions, opened a cross fire from the north and south-west upon the town. The Phœnix, with the admiral on board, began the action about noon, and plied her powerful artillery with such accuracy, that she cleared and dismounted every gun upon the fortifications, where her shot could find space enough in the embrasures to enter by: many of our ships, especially the Castor frigate, were anchored within musket-shot: and the rattle of innumerable small arms filled up the momentary pauses left by the booming of a thousand guns.

The whole mass of the lofty fortifications appeared like one great volcanic mountain, enveloped in a pyramid of cloud-like smoke, through which the lightnings flashed, and the thunder pealed from every battlement and bastion. The ships, too, enveloped each in its own canopy of flame-pierced smoke, surrounded the fiery promontory like a Liparian Cyclades: the day was gloriously bright; and the glimpses of the magnificent scenery around, appearing through vistas of white smoke-like clouds reflected in the water, were described to me by an eye-witness as producing the grandest conceivable effect. The cannonade seemed to reach a climax in the explosion of the powder-magazine of Acre, which, through all the brilliant sunshine, threw a glare upon the distant hills, and sent two thousand Egyptians in fragments to the skies: the batteries to the southward then ceased to fire, from want of hands to work the guns, but those to the northward were fought bravely to the last. In the night, the Egyptians evacuated the town; and on the following morning the British and their allies took undisputed possession of the strongest fortress in the Levant.

It was not the strength of these fortifications, however, powerful as they were, but the desperate resistance of the British and those whom they animated, that beat back Napoleon from these walls

on the 18th of March, 1799.* "Yonder is the key of the East," said he truly to Murat, as he sat down before Acre. When nine murderous but vain assaults, sixty days' suspense, and the ravages of the plague, had "affoiblissé le moral du soldat," and avenged the wholesale massacre of Jaffa, the French raised the siege, and re-entered Cairo under an arch of triumph!

But it is to the crusades that Acre owes its chief interest. It was to them, as to Napoleon, the "key of the East." Its old walls have echoed to the war-cries of the lion-hearted Richard and Saladin; and there are few families of ancient blood whose ancestors were not among the Christian host under these beleaguered towers.

* "Expeditions en Egypt et en Syrie." Par J. Miot. Second edit.

CHAPTER II.

THE BIVOUAC, AND MOUNT CARMEL.

The hot sun shrinks from the land of the Kurd,
As the welcome cry to halt is heard.
Weary and faint were they who had striven,
Through the sultry hours when that sign was given:
From the courser's back each has loosed his reign,
And he feeds at will on the verdant plain,
Or drinks of the fount that is gushing by,
While the evening breeze wakes rejoicingly.
And Arab and Frank in brotherhood share
A luxurious rest in the perfumed air;
And that balmy sense of entire repose,
Which the trammelled spirit too seldom knows.

ANON.

I swear to thee, by my holy order, by the habit which I wear, by the Mountain of our blessed founder, Elias, even him who was translated without suffering the ordinary pangs of mortality.

The Talisman.

Towns in the East are so disagreeable, and have so few resources, the country is so beautiful and full of interest, that I always felt a lively pleasure in passing out from the guarded gates of some old city to return to the tent and the wild pathway of the plain or mountain. Travel in the East is the occupation of your whole time, not a mere passage from one place of residence to another; the haunts of men soon become distasteful, and their habits irksome, to one accustomed to the wild freedom and

perfect independence of an Eastern wanderer's life: the very hardships of the latter have a charm, and its dangers an excitement, all unknown to the European traveller.

You are wakened in the morning by the song of birds, which the sleeping ear, all regardless of the jackall's howl or the ocean's roar throughout the night, yet recognises as its expected summons. You fling off the rough capote, your only covering — start from the carpet, your only couch — and, with a plunge into the river or the sea, your toilet is made at once. The rainbow mists of morning are still heavy on the landscape while you sip your coffee; but by the time you spring into the saddle all is clear and bright, and you feel, while you press the sides of your eager horse, and the stirring influence of morning buoys you up, as if fatigue could never come. The breeze, full of Nature's perfume and Nature's music, blusters merrily round your turban as you gallop to the summit of some hill to watch the Syrian sunrise spread in glory over Lebanon, Hermon, or Mount Carmel. Meanwhile, your tent is struck; your various luggage packed upon the horses, with a completeness and celerity that only the wandering Arab can attain to, and a heap of ashes alone remains to mark the site of your transient home. Your cavalcade winds slowly along the beaten path, but you have many a castled crag,

or woody glen, or lonely ruin to explore: and your untiring Arab courser seems ever fresh and vigorous as when he started. Occasionally you meet some traveller armed to the teeth, who inquires news of the road you have come, and perhaps relates some marvellous adventure from which he has just escaped. He bristles like a porcupine, with a whole armoury of pistols, daggers, and yataghans, but his first and parting salutation is that of "Peace!" — in no country of the world is that gentle word so often used, or so little felt.

Some khan, or convent, or bubbling spring marks your resting-place during the burning noon: and you are soon again in motion, with all the exhilaration of a second morning. Your path is as varied as your thoughts; now over slippery crags, upon some view-commanding mountain's brow; now, along verdant valleys, or through some ravine, where the winter torrent was the last passenger. Oleanders in rich bloom are scattered over the green turf; your horse treads odours out of a carpet of wild flowers; strange birds of brilliant plumage are darting from bough to bough of the wild myrtle and the lemon-tree; lizards are gleaming among the rocks; and the wide sea is so calm, and bright, and mirror-like, that the solitary ship upon its bosom seems suspended, like Mahomet's coffin, between two skies.

All this time you are travelling in the steps of

prophets, conquerors, and apostles; perhaps along the very path which the Saviour trod. "What is yonder village?" "Nazareth." "What yonder lake?" "The sea of Galilee." Only he who has heard these answers from a native of Palestine can understand their thrilling sound.

But evening approaches; your horse's step is as free, but less elastic than fourteen hours ago. Some wayside khan or village presents itself for the night's encampment; but, more frequently, a fountain or a river's bank is the only inducement that decides you to hold up your hand: suddenly, at that sign, the horses stop; down comes the luggage; and, by the time you have unbridled and watered your horse, a carpet is spread on the green turf, and a fire is already blazing. As you fling yourself on the hard couch of earth with a sensation of luxury, one of your attendants presents you with the soothing chibouque, while another hands a tiny cup of coffee; this at once restores tone to your system, and enables you to look out upon the lovely sunset with absorbing satisfaction. Meanwhile, your tent has risen silently over you; the baggage is arranged in a crescent form round the door; the horses are picketted in front. Your simple meal is soon despatched, and a quiet stroll by moonlight concludes the day. Then, wrapped in your capote, you fling yourself once more upon your carpet, place your

pistols under your saddle pillow, and are soon lost in such sleep as only the care-free traveller knows.

I had been only three hours in Acre, but the transition from its melancholy streets to the open country was delightful. I rode past St. George's Mount, and forded the little river Belus, whence the route lay among shrubberies of valonidis and laurustinus, and by the banks of "that ancient river, the river Kishon." We read of this brook drowning many fugitives in the discomfiture of Sisera's host; and of similar performances on its part after the Turks were defeated by the French at Mount Tabor; now, it runs meekly and unostentatiously into the sea, not six yards wide, and scarcely reaching to the horses' knees. A fine avenue of sycamores partly shades the path to Caiffa, a pretty, little, gaily-bazaared town, which we traversed; and, after some steep climbing, arrived at the summit of Mount Carmel, where the promontory looks out upon the sea. The view from here is very grand, but somewhat saddening, from the loneliness and want of cultivation that everywhere meet the eye — an immense expanse of ocean, unenlivened by a single sail; wide tracts of land, unchequered by a village; and, at the base of the mountain, a few half-bald corn-fields, and some olive and sycamore trees. The "excellency of Carmel" is indeed "departed;" but there is still much that is romantic and in-

teresting in the character of the mountain and the view that it commands. Beyond the beautiful bay to the north, the town and fortress of Acre stands boldly out into the sea; on the south, the extensive ruins of Castel Pelegrino and a wild range of mountains bound the horizon.

After a glance from the heights, I descended to the convent, a large, unadorned building of two stories high, with a dome in the midst. I was received with great kindness by the fathers; and, having met with an accident in ascending the mountain, I stood not a little in need of their hospitality. It was an agreeable surprise, instead of the usual bare, whitewashed cell, to find here a neat little sitting-room, such as one meets in Welsh inns; there was even, I think, a carpet on the floor, and certainly there were chairs and tables, rare luxuries in these parts. What struck me most, however, were some pretty hand-screens, which my host told me with pride had been painted by a "bellissima signora," during her stay at the convent. There were numerous names of lady-visitors in the fathers' book; and very pleasant it must be to those of the gentler sex who venture upon this rough Syrian travelling, to rest their delicate limbs even for a night on these soft couches of the Carmelites. From the sitting-room, a corridor leads to four bed-rooms, neatly furnished, and extremely clean: one of these, to the

great credit of the fathers, is even adapted for the reception of a married couple. In this hospitable convent I remained for five days, unable to leave my room, and most kindly attended by Fra' Jean Battista and Fra' Clementi. The latter was a meek and resigned-looking young monk, probably not more than thirty years of age, but eleven of these he had been withering in a convent; the former is a very remarkable man. — Jean Battista is now seventy years old, and yet his eye is as full of fire, and his energy as fresh, as when he first assumed the cowl in penance for errors that were, perhaps, the consequence of his temperament. That very temperament, when acting upon different motives, built up this convent where there had formerly been a monastery of some consideration; indeed, the whole mountain was once sprinkled over with little hermitages, wherein the followers of Elijah sought for the sources of his inspiration in the scenes that had witnessed his trials and his triumph.

These hermits died upon the mountain, and with them the solitary spirit. Those who afterwards sought retirement here were contented to find it in communion with fellow-sufferers, and the convent still survived. During the siege of Acre, by Napoleon, it was converted into a hospital for the wounded; and, after their retreat, blown up by the Pasha, as much out of vengeance as precaution. Jean

Battista, in making a pilgrimage to Elijah's cave, some twenty years ago, found only an altar and an archway there; but he made a vow upon the spot that he would rebuild the sanctuary; and what his strong will determined, his resolute energy accomplished. He travelled over Europe, begging as a friar for this purpose, during fourteen years, and now the stateliest convent in Palestine rewards his labours. Although its founder, he is only a lay-brother, having appointed a superior over himself and twenty-four Carmelites, who are lodged here and who dispense provisions to the poorer pilgrims: for these they have built a separate hospice.

Each monk has some peculiar office: that of Fra' Clementi consisted in receiving and entertaining guests; Jean Battista manages the temporal affairs, and the rest are occupied in some manner known only to themselves. I scarcely ever saw these last; but, while I took my meals, Fra' Clementi used to sit with me: a coarse, brown cloth hood and cassock, a rope girdle, and sandals, constituted his dress: his voice was soft and low, particularly when he spoke of that home in Italy he was never to see again. He had taken the vows merely as other men enter upon a profession, without any particular vocation for doing so; although only nineteen when he assumed the Carmelite's cowl, he had never repented of his dreary vows.

So he said, at least, and probably believed: although his expression of countenance was sad enough, there did not seem energy enough left in his hopeless heart for repining.

There are panthers, partridges, hyænas, and wild-boars on the mountain; the few goatherds who invade its lonely valleys are always armed, and drive their flocks into stone inclosures before nightfall. The gamekeeper (or destroyer) employed by the brothers of the convent was unfortunately absent, but they assured me that wild boars abounded here, and that partridge and quail were very numerous.

A more tempting spring or summer residence for any one in search of retirement could scarcely be imagined than this convent — magnificent scenery, the finest air, the calmest solitude at command; Italian spoken in perfection in the only society; and excursions within easy reach to Nazareth, Acre, Athlit, Esdraelon, Mount Tabor, and Cæsarea Philippi. The rule of the convent is to entertain a stranger for a fortnight only, but they are too happy to continue their hospitality as long as he chooses to remain, provided he will take up his quarters occasionally in the hospice, when newer guests and stronger claimants on the convent arrive.

The diet is simple, perhaps too much so, for

those who have not become accustomed to Eastern habits. Meat, except pigeons, is unknown, and even in that form is very rare; soups made of vegetables; bread, eggs, coffee, and milk are the principal diet; there was also to be had a refreshing cordial (in which brandy figured advantageously) prepared by Fra' Clementi's own attenuated hands.

There are some very curious fossils found in a field near the convent; these are called petrified fruits by the inhabitants, and bear an exact resemblance to melons and olives * in shape and colour. I believe there are other varieties in this stony garden, but these were all I saw: Fra' Clementi gave me the following account of their origin, not as a fact, I must observe, but as a legend. A churlish sort of Israelite, the Nabal of his neighbourhood, possessed a luxuriant orchard here in Elijah's time: The prophet passing by one day, and oppressed by thirst, requested this churl to give him a little fruit out of the abundance that had been bestowed upon him. "You are mistaken, old man," was the inhospitable answer; "what you see are only stones." "Many a true word is spoken in jest," said the wayfarer, or words to that effect,

* These "olives" are the spines of the fossil echinus. They are better known as the *lapis Judaica*, which abounds also in the Lebanon.

and passed on his journey. The gardener, on turning round, found that his own assertion was made true, and the pilgrim may now freely gather the fruit that was refused to the Prophet 2600 years ago.

The convent is built over the cave in which Elijah is said to have taken refuge from the persecution of Ahab, and a little lower down is a larger cavern called the "Cave of the Prophets," wherein Obadiah sheltered and fed the faithful about the same time.

The day before my departure, I went out upon the mountain in search of game: I only got a shot at one hyæna, which I wounded, but he escaped from me among cliffs where my horse could not follow. I then rode into Caiffa, to order horses for my journey, and found that every beast of burden had been pressed by the Turks for the transport of some regiments that were marching to Beyrout. The Sultan's firman would have compelled the governor to find horses for me, but I was always indisposed to use its authority for such a purpose; as the requisition would have been made of some poor farmer, whom no money could probably repay, or he would have hired his horses freely. I therefore engaged a vessel to take me to Jaffa, a distance of about sixty miles, and the captain said he could take my own horse on board of her with-

out difficulty. As it was an open boat, and did not draw above three feet of water, I was puzzled to know how this was to be accomplished; but as it frequently *was* done, and must be done, I left the arrangements to Syrian ingenuity.

The next morning, at daylight, I was awakened by Jean Battista coming to take leave of me. He was about to ride to Beyrout, a distance of one hundred miles, which he calculated on accomplishing in three days; and yet his years were seventy. Soon after his departure, two donkeys, baggaged to the ears, were to be seen picking their steps daintily down the steep path, with a very unwilling pedestrian, in the shape of my servant, assisting their proprietor to prevent the tottering little animals from rolling down the precipice. I presented Fra' Clementi with a somewhat larger gratuity than usual at departure, "not as repayment for the hospitality I had enjoyed, but as a grateful tribute to the convent and its charities." These establishments are almost the only hotels in Palestine, and their inmates always receive payment from those who are able to afford it. While those who differ from their faith cheerfully pay these very moderate demands, the being allowed to do so prevents one from feeling otherwise towards them than to any other house of entertainment, where fire, food, and shelter are afforded for a price: at Mount Carmel,

however, the hospitality was so genuine, and the attention of the monks so kind and cordial, that I had no feeling but that of a grateful guest as I took my leave.

My horse had become quite pampered during his rest, and now caracolled down the mountain's side, with a somewhat ill-timed display of activity. Poor fellow! It was the last day's health and strength he was to know.

Arrived at Caiffa, I handed him over to the captain of my transport, and went into the town about some business: when I returned, I found the poor brute laid on his side on a bed of sand in the hold of the pinnace; his fore-feet firmly bound together, and his girths firmly lashed to the gunwale. I was struck with remorse, as he raised his speaking eyes to mine (he could not move his head), and seemed to appeal against this treatment. However, every one told me it was always thus that horses were transported; that we should run to Jaffa in six hours; and, in short, become somewhat of a fatalist, I bowed no necessity, thought of Islam, lighted my pipe, and gave orders to make sail from Mount Carmel.

As soon as we got out to sea, the wind changed, and blew in half a gale from the southward: the boat was undecked, and the sea broke over her at every plunge: the coast was iron-bound, and in-

habited by robbers and outlaws, who found shelter in its desolation. At one tack we ran close to the extensive and imposing ruins of Athlit, the Castel Pelegrino of the Crusades; at another, the lurid moon revealed the ghastly remains of Cæsarea Philippi. When we neared the shore, the jackall's cry mingled with the wild passionate sobbing of the wind and the roar of the surf, and my poor horse would prick his ears at that familiar though dismal sound. Then the night closed in gloomily, and I fell asleep with the poor brute's head upon my knees, half wakened by every plunge of the creaking boat, and the moaning and struggles of my servant and horse, who seemed to suffer equal terror and distress. Daylight found us far from shore; the wind higher, and the waves wilder than ever; a burning sun burst out upon us, and burnt fierce headaches into our unsheltered and unturbaned brows. We had scarcely a rag of sail set to the storm, but when the gale caught us on the ridge of a wave we were gunwale-under in a moment, and the leaking seams of the labouring boat grated ominously in our ears. The Syrian sailors showed both nerve and skill; standing out bravely against their inclination to run before the wind and regain the port of Caiffa. The weary day passed without variety, or any refreshment but hard eggs and muddy water, and night came on as dark as

Erebus. There was no compass on board, and we only knew of our course when the roar of surf against the rocks announced to our ears that it was time to tack.

The second morning dawned on a long, low, sandy shore, terminated by a small promontory, on which stood Jaffa among its green gardens — looking cool, pleasant, and welcoming, contrasted with the surrounding desert and the foaming sea. Its harbour is a miserable little enclosure of rocks, which breaks the force of the Mediterranean waves, and just enables one to disembark. My horse was lifted out, and lay motionless on the sands, with the spray beating over him; it was an hour before he was able to stand and follow me, which he did like a dog, up the steep streets of this dreary town.

Joppa was so called, says the Abbé Geramb, from Japhet, the son of Noah, who, it seems, contracted a taste for maritime pursuits during his long cruise in the Ark. He built a seaport here, from whence Jonah took shipping when "he fled from the presence of the Lord." "Near here," says St. Jerome, "I *saw* the remains of the chain wherewith Andromeda was bound to the rock, until delivered by Perseus from the sea-monster[!]". Hither Hiram sent cedar of Lebanon, for the building of the Temple: here St. Peter saw the vision of things

common and unclean; and here Tabitha was raised from the dead.

The town is a labyrinth of khans, convents, narrow lanes, deserted ruins, and waste places, with a few dingy streets leading from one wretched quarter to another. There are no such things as stables in these parts, so I was forced to put up my horse in a vaulted passage half blocked by the ruins of a castle. The Franciscan convent is spacious enough to shelter 1000 men, and at Easter, and other seasons of pilgrimage, is often quite full; it contains an immense number of courts, house-tops, galleries, terraces, and corridors, with narrow, dirty, whitewashed cells for us — pilgrims.

In the evening I went out, like all the Joppaites of ancient and modern times, to enjoy the cool breeze upon the house-top; and, looking over the flat-roofed city, saw its various surfaces all alive, and sprinkled with gaily-dressed Syrians, for here even the Christians wear the Eastern habit. The superior of the convent sat with me for some time, and professed to point out the house-top whereon St. Peter prayed, and saw the great vision of Tolerance. This establishment, it seems, is merely a hospice, not a convent, strictly speaking; it is occupied only by four Spanish Franciscans, whose duty it is to receive and cherish pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem.

The next morning I visited our Consular agent, a civil old Arab, who told me I had better wait for a caravan, or take an escort to Jerusalem, as the road was just then very unsafe. This is an almost invariable observation in Syria, made by every one in authority to every traveller who inquires his way. Having smoked his pipe and declined his offers of service, I rode forth upon my crippled horse, whose native spirit soon flung off his weariness; and stepping out as proudly as ever, he seemed endeavouring to disguise his stiffness. The town appeared much better this morning; the bazaars and markets seemed full of business, and looked very gay, with Syrian silks and shining arms, and a profusion of fruit, flowers, and vegetables. The fortifications are rather respectable for an Eastern town, consisting of a wide ditch, a covered way, and a glacis, together with bastions and battlements along the walls. Jaffa made an honourable resistance to Bonaparte, and only 3,800 troops were left to surrender as prisoners of war, trusting to the Faith of Mercy, which the deluded infidels supposed was professed by their godless invaders: they were butchered to a man in cold blood upon the following day. *

The gateway was now filled with Turkish soldiers, and opened on a vacant space between it and

* *Miot* ("Expeditions en Egypt et en Syrie") and *Denon* (2nd edit.) confirm Sir Robert Wilson's fearful story of this massacre.

the drawbridge, presenting a very picturesque appearance: in front is a handsome marble fountain, engraved with many pious Arabic inscriptions, which recommended the traveller, as he quaffed the stream, to bless the Giver of it. An arcade of thickly-clustering vines shaded the enclosure, round which were recesses thronged with a gowned and bearded multitude, smoking and chatting gravely, or playing chess as intently as in that sublime sketch of Retzsch's, where Man gambles away his soul to Satan. Groups of picturesque and dark-eyed girls displayed the most graceful attitudes as they bent to fill their water-jars, or balanced them daintily on their veiled heads.

A broad sandy path leads from the town through rich gardens, shaded by cypresses and mimosas, and hedged with gigantic cactus, to another handsome fountain, and an open space sheltered by palms: under these, several parties of travellers, with their kneeling camels and their little fires, were luxuriously resting. After some three miles, the road opened upon the wide Plain of Sharon, sprinkled with the iris, wild tulip, and almost every flower, except its own peculiar rose.

The Hill-country of Judea lay before us in a faint blue ridge; the plains of Ascalon extended on the right; the high tower of Rama appeared in the

distance; and the next evening we were to rest at JERUSALEM! *

Towards sunset, we reached Ramleh, and beat loud and long before we obtained admittance into the Franciscan convent outside the walls: this is a similar establishment to that I had just left at Jaffa, equally spacious, and only garrisoned by three Spanish monks. In the various cool cloisters and high-walled courts, shaded by the lemon, the orange, and the palm-tree, the air was delightfully refreshing; for it was now near midsummer, and we had swept the plain of Sharon at a gallop that soon distanced our temporary caravan.

When I came down to dinner in a place like a cellar (only there was no wine in it), the fat Superior told me that I had fallen upon a fast-day, but bade me welcome to such fare as the refectory afforded. This consisted of a mass of smashed eggs, by way of an omelette, some cucumbers, and a dish of rice stewed in grease: there was good bread, however, and with this and my own tea, I con-

* The vast plains that lie between the Hill-country and the sea are very partially cultivated; but the luxuriant corn and rich grass that grow wild prove how readily it can bring forth abundance, and that it is upon the inhabitants and not upon the soil that the curse still lies. Once twenty millions of people, it is said, dwelt in plenty and prosperity, where now some 1,800,000 find a scanty sustenance. The more I see of Turkish rule, the more admirably does that rule appear adapted to accomplish a denouncing prophecy.

trived to practise abstinence even towards Lenten diet.

One of these Franciscan monks appeared to belong to a higher order of birth and intellect than any I had yet met with. He accompanied me to the house-top, where my pipe and coffee were served, and inquired anxiously about the state of Spain and the war in the Basque provinces, which I told him I had witnessed. He became quite enthusiastic in his nationality when I spoke of the oak-tree of Guernica and the Fueros of his native country, the Basque provinces; but when I asked him whether he was Carlist or Christino, he checked himself suddenly, and said with humility, "Signor — son' frate!"

Soon afterwards he left me to myself, and keenly did I enjoy that first evening of my Judean travel. It appeared almost incredible to me that in a few short hours I should stand within the walls of Jerusalem; yet there lay the path to it, opening among the hills of Judah, as they rose in beauty from Sharon's varied plains. The setting sun threw a rich glow upon the deep groves in which the picturesque town lay buried; the air was the balmiest I ever breathed; myriads of birds were singing enthusiastically in the palms and olive-branches; the laughter of the village children sounded merrily from their play-ground; the lowing of cattle, the hum of insects — all was in perfect

harmony and keeping. And then the strange, unusual appearance of the town over whose roofs I looked, Asmodeus-like, from the lofty convent terrace! All the female inhabitants were pursuing their various occupations in the open air, in the courtyards, or on the roofs of their houses, which were all pimpled with little domes rising out of their flat roofs, and covered like them with grey stucco; this, with the minarets, gave a very peculiar effect to the downward view. About half a mile from the town are the magnificent ruins of an ancient khan or mosque, or both, with a lofty tower, that serves as a land-mark for many miles around. It was very amusing to watch the town taking its evening meal, "al fresco," each party invisible to its neighbour owing to partition walls, but open to my inspection as I stood on the convent watch-tower. Then the women began to array themselves for the night, all unconscious of a stranger's presence; start not, gentle reader, for there was no *dis*-arraying; the Ramlehan maidens merely put on a loose white garment over their day-dress, and lay down to rest under the quiet sky.

My sleeping cell was less squalid than in the Jaffa convent, but still was such as no English felon would be obliged to occupy. There were musquitoes, too, as thick as gnats under a summer bough; and it was without any interruption of slumber that I

rose soon after midnight to start for Jerusalem. How soft and beautiful was that night, as its breezes whispered among the orange and the palm-trees in the cloistered courts, and the moon shone tenderly over forlorn Palestine and that far-off silvery sea, that led the thoughts insensibly away, even from Jerusalem, to Europe and to home!

Fra' Gonzaga, the Biscayan monk, got up to see me start, and in reply to my complaints of the musquitoes, observed, as if he was proud of them, "Non *sono* moltissimi?" He then glanced complacently at my breakfast-table, which was served with eatables that Ugolino would have shrunk from; and wished me "un buon' appetito" with a grim smile that had no relation whatever to a joke.

Ramleh, the ancient Arimathea, was the seat of government in the Theocratic days of Israel: here Samuel judged the people, and here the elders of the Hebrews assembled to demand a king to rule over them. It is now a mean straggling town, without fortifications, but surrounded with gardens and olive groves, that give it somewhat of a cheerful aspect. We passed through a cemetery in the twilight, and saw flocks of goats and sheep *following* their shepherds to the pasture, from which they are driven into the town every evening. Many travellers were already on the road, collecting together for the purpose of security, and all furnished with some kind

of arms, from the long musket to the candjah in their girdle. Our way lay among wide plains, very scantily cultivated, and without a vestige of inhabitants; the path was wide, and, though sandy, not deep enough to be laborius to the horses. After two hours' travel, we came to the ruins of Ekron — a fortress commanding the Passes into the Hill-country; then the road entered a defile of rocky mountains; numerous shrubs, the laurustinus, the privet, and the bay-tree, were thickly scattered over the steep acclivities. Wilder and wilder grew the scenery at each winding of the road, toppling precipices closed round us, and our little party gathered closer together as they unslung their muskets — the van looking more like a storming party than a company of peaceful travellers.

There is some instinctive love of danger in every breast; and, fortunately for our interest, a party had been robbed and ill-treated two days before in these defiles: the preparations therefore that we made were of a most imposing character. A fat old tobacconist and a lean barber rode on heroically as an advanced guard; a couple of tinkers and a Turkish soldier brought up the rear; three or four camels, half a dozen horsemen, with a couple of donkeys carrying panniers of children, formed the main body, in which my anxious servants deeply ensconced themselves; while a young Swiss, three or four Turkish cavalry

soldiers, and myself, gave our horses to be ridden by some of the tired pedestrians; while we ranged the cliffs as skirmishers, in actual hope of a gazelle or partridge, and professed anticipation of an Arnaout, or some native robber.

Soon becoming tired of playing at soldiers in a scene like this, I summoned my unwilling servants, and spurred forward as fast as almost inaccessible rocky paths would permit. I felt the utmost impatience to reach Jerusalem; and, moreover, a burning sun had been shining on us for many hours, and a well was before us. At length we reached it; but —

> "Vain was the hope that had lured us on —
> Our trust in the desert! the waters were gone."

Some damp mud alone remained, which the muleteer and his horses rather chewed than drank.

Henceforth, our path necessitated one perpetual climb, scramble, or slide: slippery rocks, yawning into deep fissures, or so round and smooth as to render firm footing impossible, constituted the only road. Yet this has been for four thousand years the highway between Jerusalem and the western plains that border on the sea. Chariots never could have been used here; and it would be impossible for cavalry to act, or even to advance against a hostile force.

The scenery resembled that of the wildest glens

of Scotland, only that here the grey crags were thickly tufted with aromatic shrubs; and, instead of the pine, the sycamore, the olive, and the palm, shaded the mountain's side.

We passed by the village of Jeremiah, and "the Terebinthine Vale." In the last we recognise the scene of David's combat with Goliah, and its little brook still sparkles here as freshly as when he picked pebbles thence to smite the Philistine. Generally speaking, the river beds were as dry as the path we trod, and this was the only stream but one that I saw between Jaffa and the Jordan. A large caravan was assembled on its banks, with all its picturesque variety of laden camels, mules with gay trappings, mountain cavaliers with turban and embroidered vest, veiled women on donkeys, half-naked Arabs with long spears, dwellers in cities with dark kaftan, or furred pelisse. All, however various their nation, profession, or appearance, were eagerly quaffing the precious stream, or waiting under the "shadow of a high rock" for the caravan to proceed.

The hills became more and more precipitous as we approached Jerusalem; most of them were of a conical form, and terraced to their summit. Yet, on these steep acclivities, the strenuous labour of the Israelite had formerly grown corn, and wine and oil; and, on the terraces that remained uninjured,

the few present inhabitants still plant wheat, and vineyards, and olive groves. There was no appearance of water, except the inference that might be drawn of wells within the few villages that hung upon the mountains' side.

The pathway continued as rough as ever, while we wound through the rocky defiles leading to the upper plains; but it was much more frequented, and I had joined a large and various company, for the sake of listening to their talk about the city that now absorbed every other interest. At each acclivity we surmounted, we were told that the next would reveal to us the object of our destination; and at length, as we merged upon a wide and sterile plain, the leading pilgrims sank upon their knees — a contagious shout of enthusiasm burst from the excited wanderers; and every man of that large company — Arab, Italian, Greek, and Englishman — exclaimed — each in his own tongue — "El Khuds!" "Gerusalemma!" "Hagiopolis!" "THE HOLY CITY!"

CHAPTER III.

JERUSALEM.

Of earth's dark circlet once the precious gem
Of living light — O fallen Jerusalem!

SOUTHEY.

Ecco! apparir Gerusalem si vede!
Ecco! da molti voci unitamente
Gerusalemma salutar si sente.

TASSO.

It was indeed JERUSALEM — and, had the Holy City risen before us in its palmiest days of magnificence and glory, it could not have created deeper emotion, or been gazed at more earnestly or with intenser interest.

So long the object of eager hope and busy imagination, it stood before me at length in actual reality — the city of David, the chosen seat of God, the death-place of his Son, the object of the world's pilgrimage for two thousand years! All its history, so strangely blended with holiness and crime, with prosperity and desolation, with triumph and despair, and a thousand associations, came thronging into recollection, peopling its towers and surrounding plains with the scenes and actors of long, eventful years. These feelings I shared in common with the humblest pilgrim that was kneeling there, and, in

some respects, he had even the advantage of me; he had made infinitely greater sacrifices than I had done, and undergone far heavier toils to reach that bourne. Undistracted by mere temporal associations, *he* only saw the sacred spot wherein the Prophets preached, and David sung, and Christ had died.

The whole cavalcade paused simultaneously when Jerusalem appeared in view; the greater number fell upon their knees, and laid their foreheads in the dust, whilst a profound silence, more impressive than the loudest exclamations, prevailed over all: even the Moslems gazed reverently on what was to them also a holy city, and recalled to mind the pathetic appeal of their forefather — "Hast thou not a blessing for me, also, O my Father?"

When the crusading army, thinned by pestilence, privation, and many a battle-field, gazed upon the view before us, that warrior-host knelt down as a single man; sobs burst from their mailed bosoms, and tears streamed down their rugged cheeks. Those tears, and not the blood so profusely shed upon the plains of Palestine, were the true evidences of the Crusading spirit.

Apart from all associations, the first view of Jerusalem is a most striking one. A brilliant and unchequered sunshine has something mournful in it, when all that it shines upon is utterly desolate and drear. Not a tree or green spot is visible; no sign

of life breaks the solemn silence; no smile of nature's gladness ever varies the stern scenery around. The flaming, monotonous sunshine above, and the pale, distorted, rocky wastes beneath, realize but too faithfully the prophetic picture — "Thy sky shall be brass, and thy land shall be iron." To the right and left, as far as the eye can reach, vague undulations of colourless rocks extend to the horizon. A broken and desolate plain in front is bounded by a wavy, battlemented wall, over which towers frown, and minarets peer, and mosque-domes swell, intermingled with church-turrets and an indistinguishable mass of terraced roofs. High over the city, to the left, rises the Mount of Olives; and the distant hills of Moab almost mingling with the sky, afford a background to the striking picture.

There was something startlingly new and strange in that wild, shadowless landscape; the clear outlines of the hills, and the city walls — so colourless, yet so well defined against the naked sky — gave to the whole a most unreal appearance; it resembled rather an immense mezzotinto engraving, than anything that nature and nature's complexion had to do with.

I am not sure that this stern scenery did not present the only appearance that would not disappoint expectation. It is unlike anything else on earth — so blank to the eye, yet so full of meaning

to the heart; every mountain round is familiar to the memory; even yon blasted fig-tree has its voice, and the desolation that surrounds us bears silent testimony to fearful experiences. The plain upon which we stand looks like the arena of deadly struggles in times gone by — struggles in which all the mighty nations of the earth took part, and in which Nature herself seems to have shared.

Each of our party had waited for the other to finish his devotions, and seemed to respect each pilgrim's feelings with a Christian courtesy, perhaps inspired by the spot. At length, all had risen from their genuflexions and prostrations, and we moved slowly forward over the rugged yet slippery path which human feet had worn in the solid rock. Countless had been the makers of that path — Jebusites, Hebrews, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Egyptians, Romans, Saracens, Crusaders, and pilgrims from every country under heaven. As we advanced, some olive-trees appeared, and deep valleys on the left, slightly marked with pale, green gardens. An enclosure concealed the prospect for a while, and then again the City of Zion appeared, shadowing with its battlemented walls the barren rocks around. As we approached, nothing but these walls were visible, presenting, probably, with their massive gates and lofty towers, the same appearance as they wore to the Crusader's view: here and there a tur-

baned head was visible, and the Crescent banner was waving from David's tower; a few tents, green, white, and blue, were scattered round, as if forsaken in a hurry; and all else looked as if it had been laid waste in order to afford no shelter to an enemy.

I had always pictured to myself Jerusalem as standing upon lofty hills, and visible from afar. It is, on the contrary, on the edge of the wide platform by which we approach from Jaffa, and is commanded by the Mount of Olives, the Hill of Scopas, and other eminences, from which it is divided by the deep and narrow ravines called the valley of Jehoshaphat, and the Vale of Hinnom. These ravines meet in the form of a Y, the lower part of which describes the precipitous glen through which the brook Kedron flows in winter to the Dead Sea.

The site of the city is in itself unique; selected originally from the strength of its position only, it offers none of the features usually to be found surrounding the metropolis of a powerful people. No river nor any stream flows by; no fertility surrounds it, no commerce is able to approach its walls, no thoroughfare of nations it finds in the way. It seems to stand apart from the world, exempt from its passions, its ambitions, and even its prosperity. Like the high-priest who once ministered in its temple, it stands solitary, and removed from all secular influences, and receives only those who come to wor-

ship at its mysteries. All the other cities of the earth are frequented by votaries of gain, science, luxury, or glory; Zion offers only privations to the pilgrim's body, solemn reflection for his thoughts, awe for his soul; her palaces are ruins, her hostels are dreary convents, her chief boast and triumph is a sepulchre.

After some resistance from the Turkish sentinels, I entered the Pilgrims' Gate under a lofty archway, and found myself in Jerusalem!

On the left within the walls is a waste place strewed with ruins, and containing a broken cistern, called the "Pool of Bathsheba;" on the right is pointed out the Hill of Zion, whereon 'David's tower" maintains its ground in tradition, if not in truth. From this open space three streets, or rather roads (for they are almost houseless), branch off; that to the left leads to Calvary and the convent of the Terra Santa; that to the right to Mount Zion, the English church, and Armenian convent; and that straight onward, to Mount Moriah, where stands the Mosque of Omar and the collection of villages that is called the city.

I betook myself to the hospice of the Latin convent, where I found a whitewashed cell and an iron bedstead at my disposal. It was dismal enough;

but long travel under a Syrian sun prevents one from feeling fastidious, and it ill becomes a pilgrim to complain on Calvary.

The convent, whose guest I now found myself, is the wealthiest and most influential of all those in Palestine. It is called by distinction *the* Convent of the Terra Santa, and has possessions handed down from the times of Godfrey de Bouillon. The other Latin convents in Syria pay deference to this, the chief guardian of the Holy Sepulchre.

Mounting a fresh horse, I repassed the gate by which I had entered on the southern side, and, with no guide but memory, rode forth to make a circuit of the city, "to walk round about her, and mark well her battlements." Sadly has all been changed since this proud challenge was spoken, yet the walls are still towering and imposing in their effect. They vary in height from twenty to sixty feet, according to the undulations of the ground; and are everywhere in good repair. The columns and architraves (at least as old as the Roman-conquered city), that are worked into these walls instead of ruder stones, bear eloquent testimony to the different nature of their predecessors. A bridle-path leads close to their base all round; the valleys of Hinnom and Jehoshaphat yawn suddenly beneath them on the west, south, and north, separating them from Mount Gihon, the Hill of Evil Counsel, and the Mount of

Olives. These hills are utterly barren, and lonely as fear can make them. Though within gunshot of the city, robberies are here committed with impunity, and few people venture to leave the walls without being well armed and attended. The deep gloom of the Valley of Hinnom; the sterility of all around; the silence and desolation so intense, yet so close to the city; the sort of *memory* with which I could trace each almost familiar spot, from the Tower of Hippicus to the Hill of Scopas, made this the most interesting excursion I ever undertook. Now we look down upon the Pool and Valley of Gihon from the summit of Mount Zion; now upon the Vale of Hinnom, with the Pool of Siloam, and Aceldama beyond the brook; now over Mount Moriah, with the Valley of Jehoshaphat beneath, and the village of Siloam on the opposite side, scattered along the banks where Kedron used to flow. Then, passing through the Turkish cemetery and over the brook Kedron, we come to the venerable Garden of Gethsemane, in which, say the legends, still stand the olive-trees that sheltered Christ. This garden is only a small grove, occupying perhaps two acres of ground, but it is one of the best authenticated scenes of interest about Jerusalem. From it, a steep and rocky path leads to the three summits of the Mount of Olives, on the loftiest of which stands the Church of the Ascension. An Armenian priest admitted me

into the sacred enclosure, motioned to a little monk to lead about my horse, and led the way in silence to the roof of the church. From hence is the most interesting, if not the most striking, view in the world.

From such a summit might the great Leader of the People have viewed the land which was to be the reward of their desert wanderings. From it, is laid bare every fibre of the great heart of Palestine. The atmosphere is like a crystal lens, and every object in the Holy City is as clear as if it lay within a few yards', instead of a mile's distance. Each battlement upon those war-worn walls, each wild flower that clusters over them, is visible: the dogs prowling about the waste places among the ruins, and cactus, and cypress; the turbaned citizens slowly moving in the streets; all are recognizable almost as clearly as the prominent features of the city.

The eminence called Mount Moriah lies nearest to our view, just above the narrow valley of Jehoshaphat. The city wall passes over the centre of it, embracing a wide enclosure, studded with cypresses and cedars, in the centre of which stands the magnificent Mosque of Omar. This is of a very light, fantastic architecture, bristling with points, and little spires, and minarets; many of these have gilded crescents that flash and gleam in the sunshine; while the various groups of Moslems, sitting on

bright carpets, or slowly wandering among the groves, give life and animation to the scene. The Mosque occupies the site of the Temple, and is held holy by the Moslem as the spot whereon Abraham offered Isaac for a sacrifice. To the left of the mosque-enclosure, within the walls, is a space covered with rubbish and jungles of the prickly pear; then part of the Hill of Zion, and David's Tower. To the right of the enclosure is the Pool of Bethesda, beyond which St. Stephen's Gate affords entrance to the Via Dolorosa, a steep and winding street along which Christ bore the Cross in his ascent to Calvary. To the right of this street, and towards the north, stands the hill of Acra, on which Salem, the most ancient part of the city, was built, they say, by Melchisedek. This hill is enclosed by the walls of the modern town; but the hill of Bezetha lies yet further to the right, and was enclosed within the walls that the Romans stormed. Beyond Bezetha stands the Hill of Scopas, wherefrom Titus gazed upon Jerusalem the day before its destruction, and wept for the sake of the beautiful city.

But from the Hill on which *we* stand, One other also wept over that fated city. No conquering armies lay around it then; luxury and plenty revelled among its marble palaces; there was then large hope on earth, and a new hope just dawned that lighted up the dark passage of the grave, and showed

through its narrow vista a glorified image of that city so dear to its inhabitants — a new Jerusalem. In vain that hope! The indomitable Jew had once before impatiently rejected God as his king, and demanded a being like himself "to reign over him:" he now refused to listen to Him, albeit of the house of David, who by his own confession "spake as never man spake;" and even, in his perverseness, boasted "that he had no king but Cæsar." *Then*, indeed, "did the sceptre depart from Israel." Foreign banners might wave upon her towers, foreign tyrants might grind her with oppression; but a nation never can know slavery until its SPIRIT is voluntarily bowed beneath the yoke.

Whatever beauty may have distinguished the city in the day of its evil pride, there is little now within the wide enclosure of its walls to claim an interest, except the unchangeable hills on which it stands. Here and there is a cluster of flat-roofed buildings, then a space bewildered with weeds and ruins; here is a busy street, with vines sheltering its bazaars, and coloured crowds streaming through it; and there is a deserted garden, with a few dreary olive-trees and cypresses shading its burnt soil; here is a mosque, with its heavy dome and its pert minarets; and there is the capacious church that covers the Holy Sepulchre.

The eye wanders away with a feeling of relief

from this most mournful city to the wide, strange prospect that surrounds it. Far to the south, we look over the barren but magnificent hills of Judah, with vistas through their rocky glens of the rich valley of the Jordan, and the calm, green waters of the Dead Sea, whose surface gleams on either side of a foreground formed by the lofty village of Bethany. Beyond Jordan and the Sea of the Plain, the mountains of the Moabites tower into the clear blue sky, and are reflected in brown and purple shadows on their own dark, mysterious Lake.

Beneath us is the Garden of Gethsemane, the Valley of Hinnom with its Tophet, and the Vale of Jehoshaphat with its brook Kedron, which meets the waters of Siloam at the Well of Job. The Tombs of the Kings, of Nehemiah, of Absalom, and of the Judges, lie before us; the caves of the Prophets everywhere pierce the rocks, that have so often resounded to the war-cry of the Chaldean, the Roman, the Saracen, and the Crusader. Beyond the city spreads the Vale of Rephaim, with Bethlehem in the distance: every rock, and hill, and valley that is visible bears some name that has rung in history. And then the utter desolation that everywhere prevails — as if all was over with that land, and the "rocks had indeed fallen, and the hills indeed had covered" the mighty, the beautiful and the brave, who once dwelt there in prosperity and peace. No

flocks, no husbandman, nor any living thing is there, except a group of timid travellers — turbaned figures, and veiled women, and a file of camels — winding along the precipitous pathway under the shadows of the palms.

Descending from the Mount of Olives, I re-entered the city by St. Stephen's Gate, where Turkish soldiers constantly keep guard; turning to the left, I visited the Pool of Bethesda, and then wandered slowly along the Via Dolorosa, in which is pointed out each spot where the Saviour fell under the burden of the Cross, as he bore it to Calvary along this steep and rugged way.

In after days I impatiently traversed the squalid city, with a monk for my guide, in search of its various localities of traditionary sanctity; but I will not ask the reader to stoop to such a labour. My monkish cicerone pointed out to me where Dives lived, where Lazarus lay, where the cock crowed or roosted that warned Peter of his crime, and even where the blessed Virgin used to wash her son's linen. It is difficult to speak of such things gravely; and yet I would not have one light feeling or expression intermingled with the solemn subjects of which this chapter attempts to treat: when we visit Marathon or Salamis, it would shame us to be insensible of their heroic associations; and the pilgrim

who can scoff within the walls of Jerusalem does his heart as little justice.

The character of the city within corresponds with that of the country without. Most of it is very solitary and silent; echo answers to your horse's tread; frequent waste places, among which the wild dog prowls, convey an indescribable impression of desolation; and it is not only these waste places that give such an air of loneliness to the city, but many of the streets themselves, dark, dull, and mournful-looking, seem as if the Templars' armed tread were the last to which they had resounded. The bazaars and places of business are confined to one small quarter of the city; everywhere else you generally find yourself alone. No one is even there to point out your way; and you come unexpectedly upon the Pool of Bethesda, or wander among the vaulted ruins of the Hospitallers' courts without knowing it. The remains of the ancient city that meet your eye are singularly few; here and there a column is let into the wall, or you find that the massive and uneven pavement is of costly marble; but, except the Pools of Hezekiah and Bethesda, the Tower of Hippicus, and some few other remains preserved on account of their utility, there is little of art to assist the memory to the Past.

The chief place of interest in Jerusalem is the Holy Sepulchre, whose site I believe to be as real,

as the panorama that the priests have gathered round it must needs be false. You descend by a narrow lane and a flight of steps into a small enclosure, where a guard of Turkish soldiers is stationed to keep peace among the Christians. After paying tribute to this infidel police, you enter into a large circular hall, supported by a colonnade of eighteen pillars, and surrounded by a large dome, in the centre of which is a pavilion containing the Holy Sepulchre. The whole of this church has been so frequently described, that I shall only mention that within its walls are condensed an array of all the events incidental to the crucifixion — the place where Christ was scourged; the hole in the rock where the Cross stood; the fissure where the rock was rent in twain; the place where the soldiers cast lots for the garments; the stone whereon the body was anointed, and lastly, the grave wherein it was laid.

According to monkish topography, Calvary was only a few yards from the sepulchre, which itself is so altered and adorned as entirely to destroy every appearance of reality. Neither from research nor personal observation, have I any right to offer an opinion on the subject; but I incline to believe that this *is* the site of the Sepulchre; and I see no great reason to deny that Calvary (never mentioned as a *hill* in the sacred writings) might have occupied a

neighbouring locality. Although *within* the present enclosure of the city-walls, it perhaps might also have been *outside* the ancient circuit, which is necessary to its identity. Tradition must have been more idle than is her wont, if she permitted such a site to be forgotten. The actual spot occupied by the Cross appears entirely devoid of proof;* but it seems evident that the place assigned to it, within a dozen yards of the Sepulchre, is the least likely of all.

It is said that Golgotha was called "the place of a skull," because Adam's was found there, "who desired to be buried where he knew, prophetically, that the Redeemer's blood should fall upon his grave."

* I have great pleasure in referring the learned reader to a very valuable dissertation on the topography of Jerusalem, by my friend Dr. Schultz, consul to the King of Prussia. It was published at Berlin since the 4th edition of this work appeared, and is entitled "Jerusalem: Eine Vorlesung, von Dr. Ernst Gust. Schultz, mit einem Plan von Jerusalem von Kiepert."

CHAPTER IV.

THE MONK, THE MISSIONARY, AND THE PILGRIM.

On the whole, we do entirely agree with those old monks, *Laborare est Orare.* In a thousand senses, from one end of it to the other, true Work is Worship.

Past and Present — CARLYLE.

We distinguish, my good father, betwixt those who only eat the bread of their own labour, and those who eat the bread of other people; and who have no other plan in life, but to get through it in sloth and ignorance, *for the love of God.*

STERNE.

Forsaking country, kindred, friends, and ease, he goes forth with the blessed gospel into pagan climes, to bear the light of eternal life to those that lie in darkness and the shadow of death.

R. M'GHEE.

It was perhaps a natural sentiment that drove enthusiasts in the earlier and stormier ages of the church to seek in retirement "that peace which the world could not give:" they might also have remembered that there was a peace which the world could not take away. But in the first burst of a new enthusiasm no second thought was admitted; men of devout faith and exemplary piety had retired to the desert for the purpose of a closer communion with their God; they had announced to an anxious and fearful world that, like the typical wanderers of

Israel, they had found a path through the desert to the heavenly Canaan — that they felt their salvation assured by living among reptiles and wild beasts, and assimilating the human life to theirs. Away then to the desert rushed multitudes, zealous for their souls' prosperity. There, the stormy heart was to find peace, the broken spirit consolation, despair itself to be transmuted into hope.

The man who first discovers treasure in a secret place may become enriched thereby, but they who follow will probably find only rubbish. The lofty minds of an Anthony and Pachomius had grown not only to strength but to power in the hermit's cell, and thousands hastened to seek for piety in the wilderness, as if it were some curious natural production that grew there only. The very desert ceased to be deserted; the solitudes of Egypt and Syria became peopled with gloomy dreamers, who seemed to think it was on the body, not the soul, that the weight of sin so heavily lay. These selfish zealots found, no doubt, a fierce luxury in penance and privation — and devils must have chuckled to see the body that God had made so strong, and fair, and comely — emaciated, disfigured, and disgraced by starvation and the scourge: the soul that had been given for the exercise of genial thought, and love and friendship, shrouded by perpetual gloom, and for ever harping, like the ailing body

upon its own sordid self. Yet these men were and are called *Catholic!*

There were some victims of this literal *mono*mania, like some of the knights in the darker ages of chivalry, who displayed a spirit, philanthropy, and understanding, singularly at issue with their narrow profession. Men travelled into the desert to seek for dispassionate advice in secular affairs from such hermits, and to stimulate their faith in spiritual matters by a glimpse at their wild zeal. St. Anthony is generally considered the Chief of the Solitaries: he lived for twenty years in a ruined castle on the banks of the Nile, and was the friend of Athanasius, who made use of his testimony against the Arians, as if it were the voice of Heaven that spoke through him.

According to the Oriental Christians, the Sethites, or "Sons of God," set the first example of the monastic life by retiring to Mount Hermon, in the hope of regaining their lately lost Paradise by the sanctity and purity of their lives: despairing at last of this, or weary of celibacy, they descended to the plains, where, intermarrying with "the daughters of men," — their kinswomen, through Cain — they begot the giants.*

Hilarion was the founder of the Christian monastic state in Syria, and St. Basil in Pontus. The

* D'Herbelot: F. Schlegel's *Phil. of Hist.*

spirit spread rapidly throughout the East with various modifications, and seems to have arrived at its climax in the person of Simeon Stylites, who raised himself (on a pillar) to the highest consideration in the monastic world, and was visited on his pious perch by emperors. At this period, every conspicuous spot in Syria swarmed with human wearers of horses' hair, and feeders on horses' provender. Every dirty cavern and uncomfortable hole in the cliffs of Mar Saba had its solitary (if such they could be called, when 10,000 of them are said to have been destroyed in one massacre by the Saracens).

Gradually the monastic spirit changed into the Cœnobitic; the monks adapted La Bruyère's principle of solitude, and thought its advantages would be improved by having some one to communicate with upon the subject: St. Pachomius has the credit of founding this Cœnobitical or conventual life. I have not space to follow these establishments through their varied history. They spread into Europe, and soon became so remiss (to use a mild term) in their conduct, that public indignation perhaps prompted, and certainly assisted St. Odo in their reformation in the eleventh century. The monasteries were then placed under the immediate protection of the Pope, and the bishops were deprived of all control over them. Then were founded the different "religious

orders" that have since spread over the Christian world, and have each its representative at Jerusalem.

When a blighted name or blighted hope has changed the heart to stone, a monk's cowl, like moss upon a ruin, may seem to become it well, but it is an indulgence, not a penance. The convent vow is a sort of moral suicide, by which the life-weary spirit, deserting its post, seeks refuge in a living tomb: the braver soul, "though faint and worn, unconquered still," tramples down its enervating sorrow, and seeks in action the means of rebuilding the ruined fabric of its hope on a firmer and worthier foundation. Many a desperate man, in the passionate and troubled ages preceding the Crusades, who could not brook the torpor of the hermit life, embraced with eagerness some painful pilgrimage or arduous enterprise that might employ his energies, while it substituted a new object for that which he had lost. Then the religious orders of knighthood were invented, and the ranks of the Templars and Hospitallers became filled with such numbers of volunteers as prove that the attributed romance of that period is not exaggerated. Some few zealous religionists devoted themselves at first to offices of charity, and to the protection of pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem: of these, aged matrons and youthful maidens, be it remembered, formed a

large proportion. This circumstance gave to the young institution an air of romance, and an infusion of chivalry; with these elements, it rapidly increased: its members at first called themselves "poor fellow-soldiers of Jesus Christ;" but, being allotted quarters within the inclosures of the Temple, they assumed the Templars' name.

The union of devotion and chivalry, the most powerful and congenial stimulants of human nature, proved still more attractive than even the solitary fanaticism: enthusiasts, who might have shrunk from the pilgrim's staff, seized eagerly the sword, and grasped at the dear privilege of being men of violence in this world, and certain angels in the next.*

The church beheld a means of acquiring powerful auxiliaries in the hosts that now thronged to the monk-martial ranks: St. Bernard organized them in due religious form, and the Pope declared himself their special bishop. The Templars appointed their first grand master, Hugh de Payens, early in the twelfth century, and the Hospitallers appear as a military body only a few years later. The former at first became popular all over Christian Europe, and had immense possessions assigned to them, in

* Plenary indulgence was granted not only to the Templars and Hospitallers, but to every Crusader; none ever required it more, or made more liberal use of the immunity.

England especially. Those of Palestine died, as became them, with the cause they served; but those of France and England, having no cause to sustain or be sustained by, fell under the popular ban, and were extirpated by Philip the Fair and Edward II.

The order of the Hospitallers originated in some pious persons attending two hospitals established at Jerusalem for pilgrims in the 11th century: it was not until many years afterwards that they imitated the Templars in becoming a military order, though they bore an equally distinguished part in the Crusades. While the Templars soon sunk into luxury — hated as universally as feared — the Hospitallers, as Knights of St. John, maintained their honourable character and popularity in the island of Rhodes and Malta, until their order was all but destroyed by Buonaparte, in 1798. Their distinguishing dress was a black mantle with a white cross; and they were bound, like their Templar and Teutonic brethren, by the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience.

The Templars wore a white mantle, emblematic of the purity supposed to be assumed by the professing knight; on it was a red cross, the sign of devotion to the Holy cause, instead of the usual device of gallantry or chivalry. Their banner was of black and white, and bore the epithet of Beau, or Bien-seant, intimating, in the language of the

time, that they were fair towards their friends, but dark and terrible to their enemies.*

During the time of the Crusades, there were few or no peaceful conventual establishments in Palestine. Whether it was that monkery became fused into chivalry, or that monasteries could not exist in the open country, and were obliged to arm in Jerusalem, I know not; but the monks of the Latin convent of the Terra Santa maintain that theirs is the only "House of Peace" that existed in the last crusade.

After the capture of Acre by the Sultan's Tartars and Mamelukes in 1291, the Crescent shone triumphantly over the whole of Palestine: by such a light History has never been able to see her way, and we lose sight of the country and its inhabitants until 1432, when La Broquère achieved a pilgrimage: he found only two monks in Jerusalem, and they were in most cruel thraldom. In 1507, Baumgarten found a monastery of Franciscans, who were able to afford him shelter and security. Thenceforth, a more liberal or politic spirit seems to have ani-

* There were several other orders of monastic knighthood, such as the Teutonic, whence arose the kingdom of Prussia; the order of St. Lazarus, that of Calatrava, in Spain, &c.; but those of the Temple, and Hospital, or of St. John, absorb all Crusade interest. Their rivalry increasing with their prosperity, soon turned into hatred and hostility; they even leagued with Moslem powers against each other, and in 1258, actually fought out their claims to superiority in a fair field without other combatants. The Knights of St. John were victorious, and scarcely a Templar remained alive.

mated the rulers of this doomed land, for pilgrimages became comparatively safe; the Christian religion was actually almost respected, until England unfortunately restored Jerusalem to the Turks, and then tamely permitted them to prohibit the building of her church.

At present, there are numerous convents in Jerusalem, which have each their chapel in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. The Latin convent of the Terra Santa ranks first in antiquity and possessions, and is under the protection of the King of the French; its chapel is plain, but the most extensive in the edifice.

The Greek convent comes next in point of the number of its pilgrims, which involves that of its wealth; there are also Armenian, Coptic, Abyssinian, and Maronite convents at Jerusalem, and, indeed, all the creeds of the Christian world have their representatives here. It is a marvellous sight, and one to make a spectator thoughtful, to see those rival sectaries bending over the Tomb whence all their hopes have risen, each believing that his own proud heart contains the only real hope — each setting his miserable yet complicated and intolerant heresy above the grand and genial truth, and exalting the bye-laws of his sect above the Magna Charta of the soul.

Far be it from me to bring a sweeping accusation

against any body of men, especially against the silent and defenceless victims of monastic enthusiasm. I would fain believe that many of these isolated beings serve God in singleness and purity of heart; I would fain hope that many have found peace in those dark cells, for which they have exchanged the bright world to which they were born heirs — heirs of freedom, light, and life. But what can be said in defence of those who prostitute the Sacred Mysteries to Mammon — who profane the very sepulchre of Christ with the foulest falsehood and the blackest hypocrisy?

By the grave of the mortal friend we have loved and lost on earth, men meet even their enemies in peace; but, at the Saviour's Tomb, the infidel watches with drawn sabre to prevent his followers from destroying one another. At this tomb, the chiefs of two rival and hating creeds unite *for once* on Easter Eve, but it is in the cause of fraud. Enclosed within the chapel, Greek and Armenian bishops call down fire from heaven by the appropriate means of a Lucifer-match! Greek and Armenian pilgrims strive madly to light their torches at this sacred flame; and priests of other faiths stand scorning by — in *their* turn to triumph in some other dastard superstition.

I now turn, with something of satisfaction but

little triumph, to the ministers of the reformed faith in Palestine.

There is marvellously little of a practical and active missionary spirit to be found among the ministers of the Reformed Church, considering the warm interest the laity take in the matter.* It appears strange that, in a life so full of enterprise in the holiest cause, so well calculated for the exercise of energy, genius, and Christian charity, — the young and ardent spirits of our universities do not more frequently volunteer in the missionary cause. Assuming, as a truth, that the Hebrew lies in bondage in that very land where the liberty of the soul was first preached to man through Hebrew lips; assuming that, under the banner of our faith, that liberty alone is to be found; — is the old crusading spirit so dead amongst us, that no one will now bear the banner of the Cross once more to Palestine in a purer cause? When worldly gain or worldly glory may be won, where are the dangers, the climate, or the savages, that deter the enterprising sons of England? While the fatal coasts of Demerara and the pestilential islands of the Chinese seas swarm with adventurers in the cause of conquest and of commerce, the Holy Land — the Land of Promise to us as to them of old — remains with-

* Last year, the Church of England Missionary subscriptions amount to £ 116,827 18 *s.* 11 *d.*

out one volunteer from the ranks of our Universities. Oxford contents herself with Jerusalem in the abstract, and has not a single representative of her principles in the cradle of the Fathers: yet she might there freely exercise her ascetic discipline, and, perhaps, edify those who cling to the memory of the ancient Eremites. Cambridge sends annually some three or four hundred students to swell the ranks of the church militant, for which, however, they are content to keep garrison in quiet glebe and peaceful parsonage — Palestine knows not their name. With respect to the Dublin University, it has the task of educating the priesthood of a church that is too truly missionary in its own green isle. When I was in Syria, there was not an English missionary who had taken a University degree; nor, with one exception, was there a Christian-born minister of our church.

Nevertheless, her cause is not the less faithfully served by the courageous few who sustain the responsibility of representing the primitive pure faith in Palestine; that faith for which England has laboured so patiently in the closet, and fought so fiercely in the battle-field.

Honour to that faithful few who uphold the name and character of our church! — exiled from society, and all the advantages of civilization; wearing away their lives in a dangerous climate, in a

lonely land; sustained only by the consciousness of their high calling, uncheered even by success — they live, and watch, and work, and die, — half forgotten by their countrymen, and entirely unknown to fame. Honour to their brave hearts! and may brighter prospects yet arise to cheer them in their arduous path of duty!

The American missionaries have an establishment at Jerusalem, and also at Beyrout, and the Lebanon; two of their clergymen and a physician reside among their mountains, and board, lodge, and educate about fifty pupils there. These are the children of Druses, Maronites, or Greeks; no Moslem ever entering a Christian school. The Americans have a printing-press, from which they issue a considerable number of Arabic tracts, and copies of the Scriptures for distribution among the people; but, on the whole, their labours have not been rewarded by any considerable success.*

One of the most efficient means by which prejudices against the missionaries of our own and

* I have lately heard from the Lebanon that the Americans have now fifteen schools, including those at Beyrout, Hasbeia, and throughout the Lebanon. Their missionaries are devout and zealous men, though Presbyterians, and have, probably, produced a deeper effect than is at present apparent. The Oriental churches are much attached to the Episcopal form of church government, and, therefore, our missionaries would generally be better received. We have not one in all the East, except those sent specially to the Jews — the most hopeless, unprofitable of all. The intelligent, well disposed people of the Lebanon have no Church of England missionaries. (T. K.)

other churches are removed, and a sense of obligation inspired and constantly renewed is that of the medical establishments connected with the missions. Dr. M'Gowan, an able and intelligent physician, presides over that at Jerusalem, and distributes advice and medicine gratuitously to crowds who seek for his assistance. Dr. Kearns, another excellent physician, presided over a similar establishment at Beyrout: unfortunately for Syria, he has lately been ordained to an English living.*

The service of our church is performed twice every Sunday at Jerusalem by the bishop and one of the clergy attached to the mission. In the morning, the service is read in English; in the afternoon in German, for the sake of the Jewish converts. There is a neat little chapel in the enclosure, purchased by the mission, which, however, is only intended for temporary occupation while the church is being built. The congregation consisted of about thirty persons when I was there, among whom were the bishop's and the missionaries' families, the Prussian consul, one or two strangers, and eight converted Jews.

* It may be taken as a proof of the efficacy of this most practical Christian charity, that the generous and enlightened Sir Moses Montefiore, has lately sent over a Hebrew physician to Jerusalem. I heard from Dr. M'Gowan that his practice was not in the least diminished by the arrival of this rival in his charitable labours, whom he spoke of as a gentleman of learning and liberality.

I have before alluded to the fact of permission having been granted by Mehemet Ali for the building of our church; under his government, the walls were raised to the height of about two feet: England expelled the Egyptians from Syria, and gave Jerusalem to the Turks; they, in return, at once put a stop to our nascent church, alleging a quibble of Moslem law, which forbids the construction, or even reparation, of any place of Christian worship. Thus, for nearly three years, the British church at Jerusalem was suffered to exist only as a subject for Moslem insult and heretical scoff.

As the soldier-spirit seems epidemic wherever armies meet, and even the landsman feels something of the sailor stir within him as the ship that bears him battles with the waves; so one inevitably experiences something of the pilgrim enthusiasm on approaching Jerusalem, and endeavours to cherish the feeling as if it were a religion in itself. In such a mood, even the traveller who professes a more spiritual faith might kneel upon Calvary, and prostrate himself at the Holy Sepulchre as a mere sentiment, if awe of the sacred places did not dispel every illusion, and sternly call upon the startled soul to put off all disguise. Not so the professed pilgrim — the very ceremonies and the actor in

them, from which *we* shrink as from a mockery, exercise a power and a spell over *his* excited heart: the gilding and ornaments, the painted altar and embroidered priest, the pealing organ and the fragrant incense — all are full of mystery and awe to those for whom they are intended. Take, then, one brief glance at that sepulchre; visit the reputed Calvary, for the sake of the association that can realize its own locality; pause not to scoff at, to condemn, or coldly scrutinize, the wrapt worshippers around you — but go forth in the humble hope that your faith is right, and that, whatever church-name you may be called by, your heart is CATHOLIC.

Let us leave to those who make livelihood by them such scenes as the house where Mary dwelt, where Dives revelled, and where dogs licked the sores of Lazarus; the spot where the cock crew, the cavern where Peter wept. Enough for us, that on this soil the Saviour laid down his life — so transcendently heroic, so meekly humble: enough for us, that these skies above us received Him risen, and still bespeak his presence. Pensively let us ascend the rugged Road of Sorrow,* along which the Cross was painfully borne; mournfully let us stand on Calvary; then gratefully turn to the Mount of Olives — in pilgrim language, the Mount of Blessing — and breathe a prayer that the experience of

* Via Dolorosa.

that day may not be lost on the soul. — We envy not the man who can merge the pilgrim in the traveller, and the believer in the antiquary.

Often have I wandered among the desolate enclosures of Jerusalem by the moon's mournful light, that seemed to harmonise with the ruins round: the streets were silent as the grave; the night-wind, like a wailing spirit, alone wandered through the forsaken shrines, or sighed among the cypress and the palm-trees that towered against the dark blue sky: but sometimes the howl of the wild dog struck upon the ear; and more than once I was startled by the voice of a poor Scotch maniac exclaiming in passionate accents, "Woe! woe! woe to Zion!"

At Easter, the pilgrims assemble in thousands to visit the Jordan. The Arabs know this season as well as the sportsman does the 1st of September, and assemble in tribes along the road to Jericho in the hope of booty. The Turkish governor always sends a guard with each caravan, aware of the importance of pilgrims to Jerusalem, and willing to afford facility to this, as to any other enterprise conducive to the revenue.

It is an imposing sight to witness that long array of pilgrims winding through the gloomy Passes of the Judean hills, with the bright sunshine flashing

on the bristling spears of the Bedouin, and the gorgeous trappings of the Albanian cavalry; the long necks of the camels peering high over the mass, and the eager, huddling movement of the timorous crowd. Woe to the poor pilgrim who lags behind, or is overtaken at nightfall on the outskirt of the camp! They are vigilantly beset by the children of Ishmael, who consider the privilege of robbing as being theirs by Divine right. "God," say they, "gave to Isaac the land of Canaan, but to Ishmael the Desert, and all that is found thereon."

Arrived at the Jordan, the pilgrims rush into the deep and rapid river, with such enthusiasm that they are not unfrequently carried away by it, and drowned. The Greek and Latin church has each its peculiar spot where Christ was baptized, as well as its peculiar Easter; so they never interfere with each other here as in the Holy Sepulchre. The leader of the troops only allows a certain time for the immersion, and then re-forms his caravan to return to Jerusalem.

In the valley of the Jordan, there is much wood, and there were formerly many palms: here each pilgrim cuts himself a staff, and is thenceforth a "palmer," or one whose pilgrimage is accomplished. *

* "If the Holy Land were in France, for instance, how profaned it would be — gay, profligate parties continually forming to see the

The Turks have a garrison in Jerusalem of about eight hundred soldiers. The surrounding country, nominally under their authority, is in fact ravaged by the Bedouin up to the very walls of Jerusalem, and the different villages look only to themselves for protection. Jerusalem is ill-adapted at present for a military post; it is commanded by the Mount of Olives, the Hill of Evil Counsel, and the Hill of Scopas, within half cannon-shot. Its supply of water is very limited, and depends in summer altogether upon tanks: Kedron has long ceased to flow during the warm months, and wells are unknown. The road from Jaffa is almost impassable for artillery, and affords unequalled facilities for guerilla troops to fight, and cut off supplies.

Jerusalem is about forty miles from the sea, and twenty-four from the Jordan. There is very little wheat grown, and very few cattle fed in its neighbourhood. Its present population of about 12,000*

Divine 'lions' — *e. g.*, 'We will go by 'bus to Jerusalem — dine at the Hotel of the Ambassadors, where is a capital *cuisine* — then by steam to Bethlehem and the Manger, then to the Opera — and finish by a *petit souper* at the Holy Sepulchre.' But God hath surrounded the pathway to His grave with thorns, and privations, and dangers." — *Travels of the Abbé Géramb, Monk of La Trappe.* This monk, while he ridicules unsparingly the miracles of the Greek Church, gives the most outrageous anecdotes of the miracles of his own. — See p. 79, vol. i., &c.

* Viz. 4,000 Moslems, 3,500 Christians, 3,500 Jews, and 800 Turkish troops in garrison. It is with diffidence I venture to offer Eastern statistics; Mr. Wild says there are 35,000 inhabitants in Jerusalem; at least two-thirds more than our consul admits.

souls, finds a very scanty subsistence, and have no commerce whatever to assist them. Alms and pilgrims are the principal, if not the only sources of wealth. The Jews, Latins, and Greeks, are entirely dependent on such resources.

CHAPTER V.

BETHLEHEM, AND THE DEAD SEA.

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid!
Star of the East, the horizon adorning
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid!
BISHOP HEBER.

I felt little inclination to linger at Jerusalem after I had explored the localities prescribed, and such as I had selected for myself. It was now midsummer; and the sun, reflected from the white walls and marble pavement, seemed to surround me with a fiery glow. The very zephyrs were so languid from the heat, that they refused any longer to wander through the streets, narrow as these are made, in order to stimulate their energies: the scorched leaves had no quiver; the living city was more silent under the noontide sun than at midnight; and the whole world seemed to be gradually growing red-hot. I felt escape was absolutely necessary, and prepared to avail myself of an invitation from our bishop to Bethlehem, where he had been staying for some time.

The distance is about five miles; the way lies, for the most part, over arid and dreary hills, with

here and there a scanty crop of wheat in the intervening valleys, and an occasional herd of goats browsing invisible herbage, under the guardianship of a herdsman shaggy as his flock, and as brown and bare as the rocks around him.

Occasionally we catch glimpses of the wild mountain scenery that wraps the Dead Sea in its barren bosom. No other landscape in the world is like this — it resembles rather some visionary sketch of Martin's, roughly done in raw sienna, than anything in nature; distorted piles of cinereous hills, with that Dead Sea lying among them like melted lead, unlighted even by the sunshine that is pouring so vertically down as to cast no shadow. After passing the convent of Mar Elyas, on a hill upon the left, and the tomb of Rachel, in a valley on the right, the scenery becomes more attractive; some olive groves, intermingled with small vineyards, clothe the hills; rich cornfields are in the valleys: and lo! — as we round a rugged projection in the path — Bethlehem stands before us!

This little city, as it is called by courtesy, has an imposing appearance — walled round, and commanding a fertile valley from a rugged eminence. I rode through steep and rocky streets, that were crowded with veiled and turbaned figures in their gala dresses (for it was a festival), and was much struck by the apparent cleanliness and comfort of

this little Christian colony. Ibrahim Pasha, hearing complaints of quarrels between its Christian and Moslem inhabitants, and finding that the former were more numerous, impartially ordered the latter to emigrate; so that Bethlehem is now almost exclusively Christian.

The beauty of the women of Bethlehem has often been observed upon, but I confess it did not strike me as remarkable; nor did I see a countenance there that betokened Jewish blood. It is remarkable that the Madonna of Raphael (with which, perhaps, all Christendom associates the idea of a portrait,) has nothing of the Jewish character; nor does any other master appear to have borne in mind the race that she belonged to. Except one Madonna of Murillo's, and the celebrated Negro Virgin, all the pictures of value that we possess are exquisitely fair; rather abstractions of feminine grace, sweetness, and purity, than resemblances of any "daughter of the house of David." And here we easily forget that Mary was a Nazarene, and eagerly scrutinize each maiden face in Bethlehem for a realization of the blessed countenance that has so long haunted our imaginations: — in vain! the Virgin remaining — as is meet — a divine abstraction.

The reader may smile; but it was with something like grave respect I looked upon each carpenter in Bethlehem; the very donkeys assumed an

additional interest; and the cross with which they are so singularly marked, a meaning: the camels seemed as if they had just come from the East with gifts, and the palm-tree offered its branches to strew the holy ground; every shepherd appeared to have a mystic character; and, when "night came with stars," I almost looked for His, and tried to trace it over Bethlehem.

The chapel of the Nativity is a subterranean grotto, into which you descend through darkness that gives way to the softened light of silver lamps suspended from the roof. Notwithstanding the improbability of this being the actual place of the Nativity, one cannot with indifference behold a spot that, during eighteen hundred years, has led so many millions of pilgrims in rags or armour from their distant homes. Even supposing the tradition to be true, it is impossible to recognise any reality through the mean disguise of tawdry ornaments.

After visiting this chapel and the Church of St. Helena, I hastened to pay my respects to our bishop, whom I found in the refectory: I shall long remember with grateful pleasure the evening I passed in that Armenian Convent, where his kindness and piety appeared to have conciliated towards him the affection and respect of all the monks. It was a striking sight that ancient refectory, gloomy with carved pannelling and painted glass, occupied only

by the prelate of a foreign creed, and the fair girl, his daughter, who sat beside him. As the dark-robed monks passed by the grating that separated the refectory from the corridor, each laid his hand upon his heart, and made a graceful reverence, with his eyes still fixed upon the ground.

After dinner, as there was still half-an-hour of daylight, and a bright moonlight to fall back upon, I mounted my horse, and, accompanied only by my dragoman, rode forth to the Pools of Solomon, about six miles distant, on the road to Hebron. This neighbourhood has a bad character, and I was warned more than once of danger from the Arabs, but I had so often received similar intimations that I now heard them as mere common-places. In the hurry of departure, my servant had come away from the convent unarmed, but he cantered along after me as cheerfully as if clad in panoply, and seemed to consider a small bottle that peeped suspiciously from his holsters as a good substitute for more offensive weapons.

We pushed forward at a gallop over a wild and rocky tract, where the pathway was scarcely visible among the fragments with which it was thickly strewn: yet this has been a highway from the days of Abraham, and we read of the constant use of chariots along these roads. Now, the way lay over a smooth and slippery rocky surface; now, narrow-

ed between blocks of stone, it was covered with tangled roots, or seamed by wide fissures. All the same to my bold Arab courser seemed smooth turf or rugged rock: eagerly she swept along over hill and hollow, as if it were a pastime; bounding from rock to rock with the ease of a gazelle and the mettle of a bloodhound. The evening was sultry warm, but no stain darkened her silken skin, not a pant escaped from her deep chest, not a spot of foam flecked the Mameluke bit.

The sun was just setting in Eastern glory as we reached a vast embattled Saracenic castle, on which ruin has made but slight impression: beneath it lie the Pools of Solomon, from which water was once conveyed to Jerusalem.*

I returned more slowly and pensively to Bethlehem, by the light of as brilliant a moon as ever shone over this hallowed land in its proudest hour. On the fields through which I was passing, the glory of the Lord once shone around; the announcement of "Peace on earth, good will toward man," was heard through this calm air from angel-voices. In the distance, clear against the starry sky, stood "the city of David," from out whose gloomy walls arose the Light of the World.

* These are in good repair, but quite dry, and indeed it would take all the water I have yet seen in Judea to fill them. They are three in number, at three different levels, and measure respectively about 600, 500, and 300 feet in length.

As I rode thoughtfully along, I did not observe that my servant was missing. I had heard a shot, but such sounds are too familiar to excite attention in a country where every man goes armed. I rode back to the valley where I had seen him last, but there was no sign of him; a few minutes afterwards I met a goat-herd with a musket slung upon his his shoulder, which I seized hold of, as I demanded intelligence of the dragoman. The man did not appear surprised, said he had heard a shot, and seen a man galloping off towards the mountains: at the same time he opened the pan of his firelock, to show *he* had not fired. I offered him a piece of gold if he would accompany me in my search, but he pointed silently to his flock, and moved on. I then rode along each path, and ascended every eminence, shouting out Nicóla's name, which the echoing hills took up, and carried far away. There was no sign of him; the rocky pathways afforded no trace of his footsteps. I rode back to Bethlehem, and the governor not being visible, I enlisted some townspeople in my search. I then went to the bishop, to request that his mounted servants might assist me. He was in the convent chapel; and here, hurried as I was, I paused for a moment to contemplate the scene that revealed itself as I drew aside the tapestry that occupied the place of door.

The altar blazed with gold, and the light of the

consecrated lamps showed richly on its embroidered velvet drapery: the superior of the convent, with a reverend grey beard falling over his dark purple robes, had his right hand raised in the attitude of declamation; while the bishop, in his black dress, would have been scarcely visible in the gloom, but for the white drapery of the lady, his daughter, who leant upon his arm, and followed with her eyes the arguments of each speaker. The sudden change from excitement and hard riding, and crowded streets, and eager voices, to that calm, solemn scene, was so imposing, that I almost forgot my haste in its contemplation; but the clank of sword and spur broke dissonantly into the conversation of the churchmen: they turned to me with anxious and kind attention, and the bishop immediately placed his groom and janissary at my disposal.

I did not wait while the servants were arming themselves and mounting; but, leaving directions for them to try the Jerusalem road, and directing some armed citizens, who pressed eagerly to be employed, to disperse themselves over the neighbouring hills, I rode away to the ill-favoured village, in the direction of which my servant had last been seen. This place bore an evil character in the country; it sold little but wine and spirits, and bought nothing; yet it was walled round as carefully as if it contained the most respectable and valuable com-

munity. Unwearied as in the morning, my gallant mare dashed away over the rocky valley, exulting in her strength and speed. She pressed against the powerful Mameluke bit, as if its curb were but a challenge, and it was only by slackening the rein that she could be induced to pause over some precipitous descent, or tangled copse; then, tossing her proud head, she would burst away again like a greyhound from the leash. Her hoofs soon struck fire out of the flinty streets of the unpopular village; few people appeared there, and those few seemed to have just come in from the country, for every man carried a musket, and wore a knife in his sash; they answered sulkily to my inquiries, and said that no horsemen had entered their village for many a day. Seeing now that it was useless to seek further until daylight, I pushed on towards a different gate from that by which I had entered: a steep street, whose only pavement was the living rock, led down to this; as I cantered along, I could see a group of dark figures standing under the archway, and the two nearest of the party had crossed their spears to arrest my passage. I could not then have stopped if I would; neither the custom of the country nor the circumstances of the case required much ceremony; so, shouting to them to "stand clear," I gave spurs to my eager steed, and burst through them as if I was "switching a

rasper:" the thin spears gave way like twigs; the mob rebounded to the right and left, against the wall; they were all armed, and mine was not the only steel that gleamed, as a fellow rushed forward to seize my bridle. The next moment my mare chested him, and sent him spinning and tangled in his long blue gown: while I shot forth into the open moonlight, and, turning round a pile of ruins, was in a moment hidden from their view.

I now held on my way for Bethlehem, when, at a turn of the path, I came suddenly upon an armed party. They proved to be only some citizens, however, who had come out to inform me that my servant was found: they scarcely believed that I had been in and *out* of that "den of robbers," as they harshly called the village I had just been visiting. A few minutes afterwards I found my unfortunate dragoman at the convent, pale and trembling, and leaning against his foaming horse, with a crowd of men, women, and children, listening, with open mouths and eyes, to his adventures.

He had forgotten his rosary at the Pools of Solomon, and turned back to look for it; while slowly descending a steep part of the road, an Arab fired at him from behind a rock, so close that his jacket was singed, while the bullet had torn off part of the embroidery of his collar: I believe the poor fellow's skin was slightly scratched besides,

and he was so terrified that as he galloped off he mistook the road, and never drew rein until he reached Jerusalem. Here he found the gates closed, and the guards refused to admit him: he had been met at last by the bishop's servants, making the best of his way back to Bethlehem.

I had rather enjoyed my moonlight gallop, notwithstanding my anxiety for the cause of it; yet I found it a most pleasant change to join the quiet tea-party in the refectory. It was a rare and real pleasure to enjoy such society, under such circumstances; and the evening flew rapidly away until the convent's chimes announced the hour for prayer. Then, in the midst of that gloomy convent, I heard the noble liturgy of our own creed read by a father of our own Church, whose voice was echoed by the spot from whence that worship sprung.

And afterwards we walked on the convent's terraced roof, and traced by the clear moonlight the various scenes of interest that lay beneath us. In yonder valley Ruth was found gleaning by her gentle kinsman; yonder mountain is Goliah's hill: among those fields on which glory seems still to shine, the shepherds received the angel-tidings that Christ was come: beneath us was the manger wherein He lay; around us the objects on which His infant eyes unclosed; from beyond those distant, pale, blue mountains, came the "kings of Arabia

and Saba, bringing gifts;" and over the hill-country opposite, in after-ages, came other pilgrims, in warrior guise or humble weed, ready to lay down their lives, their loves — anything but their sins — upon that hallowed spot.

It was late when we retired for the night; a lay-brother of the convent showed me the way to the cell I was to occupy, and, depositing his little cresset upon the floor, left me, with a salutation, to my repose.

The next morning, after matins, I waited on the superior of the Armenian Convent, to pay my respects and to thank him for his hospitality. He was a fine-looking old man, with a very gracious, though somewhat patronizing air. "We are always most happy," he said, "to receive any friend of the Bishop of the English, and in future shall be happy to receive you on your own account." I offered the lay-brother the gratuity usually expected at a convent; this he courteously declined, even when put in the light of a charity for him to distribute among the poor. Finally, I took leave of our bishop, with feelings of gratitude and respect for him, and an increased interest in his mission.*

* The Bishop Alexander died in 1846, in the land of his labours, and was succeeded in his episcopate by the Rev. Samuel Gobat. The King of Prussia having the appointment, selected this eminent person in consideration of his fitness and missionary services alone. He is a native of Switzerland, and has served the Church Missionary Society

Before proceeding to the Dead Sea, I was obliged to return to Jerusalem for my baggage-horses and a Bedouin escort: I found Abdallah, their Sheikh, waiting for me, but he had left his horse and his arms without the walls. Issuing by the Zion gate from the city, we rode down into the valley of Hinnom, where, under a cave that seemed to suit the character of the group, we found six wild-looking Bedouin awaiting us with Sheikh Abdallah's horse. Their dress consisted of a light turban, a coarse white frock with cross-belts of thick cord, and a pair of slippers. The Sheikh's was nearly the same; but he had a cloak of camel's-hair cloth, striped brown and white: the footmen had each a long musket and a knife in his belt. The Sheikh carried his musket slung at his back, a long spear in his hand, and a scimitar by his side. The Arabs assisted their chief to mount with considerable ceremony, and then professed themselves, according to Eastern custom, my most obedient slaves.

We mustered ten persons in all, including the seven Bedouin, two servants, and myself: I rode forward alone, and a lonelier scene never echoed to a traveller's tread; when a turn in the road hid my

and its cause in Abyssinia, Egypt, and Lebanon. The Church of Jerusalem will, it is hoped, be opened and consecrated by Bishop Gobat on Wednesday, the 19th of April next (1848). Gobat's *Travels in Abyssinia* (1846) will richly reward any reader who takes an interest in the Church, in enterprise, or travel.

own cavalcade from view, there was no longer a sign of life in all the dreary valley: the path lay through defiles of steep and lofty hills, pierced everywhere with caves and fissures that harboured only the jackall and the robber. The scenery became grander, gloomier, and sterner, as we approached Mar Saba; the dry bed of the brook Kedron ran winding through the most extraordinary fissure, which clove, not a rock, but a mountain; some ten or twelve miles in length: its lofty and precipitous sides presented curiously contorted strata in their jagged and vertical cliffs; and were pierced with innumerable caverns, wherein the Eremites of old lived under Hilarion's rule. The Carismians slaughtered, it is said, 10,000 of those solitaries, whose bones were afterwards piously collected and buried beneath the convent church of Mar Saba.

At length, after four hours' riding, along dry, brown, and barren cliffs, on which no insect moved or herbage grew, I came in sight of the magnificent and romantic monastery that has stood in these savage solitudes for 1300 years. It covers the side of an almost precipitous ravine, occupying the whole face of the cliff from base to summit; battlemented walls enclose it on every side, and a deep, dark, narrow glen yawns beneath it. Our sketch,* which presents a side view of the monastery, with its ir-

* This refers to the original English Edition.

regular walls and many terraces, will convey a more intelligible idea than words can do of the appearance of its precipitous and picturesque situation.

Beneath lies the bed of the brook Kedron, which turns away to the left, und runs into the Dead Sea through the mountains of Engedi.

The Bedoüin unceremoniously led their horses in through a small postern-gate off the road, which ran level with the highest part of the monastery, and my servants and I descended by a winding path to the chief gate. There were several monks scattered over the cliffs, gazing on the setting sun, whose last beams lighted up even those fearful chasms with something of a cheerful smile. I was admitted, and somewhat coldly received by a venerable-looking friar, who told me afterwards he had taken me for a Turk. As soon as it transpired that an Englishman had arrived, several monks came forward, and escorted me with hospitable welcomes through vaulted passages, terraces, and innumerable steps, to a very pretty little garden lying in a nook of rocks. Off this was the "strangers' room," a spacious and handsome apartment, luxuriously carpetted, and surrounded with a soft divan. An Albanian took away my boots, and an Athenian hung up my arms: two Ionians approached hastily with trays of sweetmeats and cool water; and a fine old Russian Padre lighted my pipe, and then offered

a powerful cordial in a liqueur glass. Nothing could exceed the hospitality in which they seemed to vie with one another: as yet, they ministered in silence, my languages being unknown to them; but, at length, an intelligent monk was produced in triumph who could speak Italian. The convent belonging to the Greek church, the monks understood for the most part nothing but Romaic and Russian; an inhabitant of Joannina, who had served under Ali Pasha, was the only man out of forty, with the exception of the Superior who could speak any but his native tongue.

When I was considered sufficiently rested, the Superior came to visit me, and, after a long conversation, deputed my Epirote friend to show me over the convent, as I proposed starting before daylight. This was founded by St. Sabas in the sixth century, and has maintained its ground, they say, ever since. It is true, the monks were occasionally massacred by the Saracens, Turks, and Carismians; but their martyrdom only gave fresh interest to the spot in the eyes of their successors. The monastery has been lately repaired by the Greek convent at Jerusalem, to which it is a sort of chapel-of-ease: it contains a beautiful church, dimly lighted by two silver lamps, kept ever burning before pictures of the Saviour and the Virgin: round the head of each figure is a glory-circle of gold and precious stones, on

which the lamp's light falling produces a very peculiar effect. As we left the church, a bright moonlight was shining on the cliffs, and long flights of steps, and terraces, and gardens, so strangely intermingled in this convent; here and there, dark-robed figures were gliding silently about, or sitting on the cliffs, enjoying the cool night-breeze.

About nine o'clock, an old monk, with a large bunch of keys in his cord girdle, brought in a lamp and some supper, consisting of brown bread, eggs fried in oil, boiled rice, and very sour wine. My Albanian friend stood near me all the time of the repast, and said it was a pleasure to have a stranger to speak to. He had come recently from Mount Athos, the Monte Santo, as he called it, where he had passed twenty years of his life in a Greek convent. He said there were not less than 40,000 monks and eremites on that mountain. After supper, I went out to stroll among the cliffs; and the scenery was certainly the wildest and strangest I had ever seen. The night was very beautiful; and it was past midnight when I flung myself on the soft divans that so unexpectedly wooed repose in this stern-looking convent.

The next morning I was in the saddle before dawn, and wandering among the dreary but picturesque mountains of Engedi towards the Dead Sea; not a living thing met my eye for hours, except a

few gazelles, and my own party winding slowly along the path, whilst I wandered on through many a wild pass and gloomy volcanic gorge; wander where I might, however, I was ever kept in sight by the watchful Sheikh; his dark figure and thin grey horse seemed ever before me — he appeared to stand on every hill. In about three hours, we reached the mountain-brow looking down upon the Valley of the Jordan; and delightfully that beautiful strange scenery burst upon our weary and dazzled eyes. Far from looking gloomy or curse-stricken, it was the most *riante* scene I had yet beheld in Palestine. The dread Lake itself was as brightly blue as those of Italy; the mountains of Moab and Ammon lifted their lofty line against the early sun, and wore a purple hue over their multiplied cliffs and promontories. Here and there, in the valley, were pale strips of desert, it is true; but elsewhere the ground was covered with verdure or luxuriant shrubs: the winding groves of tamarisk and acacia showed where Jordan stole along, occasionally betraying his presence by a silvery gleam.

We rode down a steep and rugged path into the plain, and continued for some miles through thick jungle, alternating with deep sand, or luxuriant grass. At length we reached the shore of the fatal Sea, and encamped within a few yards of the water's edge. The Sheikh made opposition to the pitching

of the tent, lest it should be seen by the hostile tribes; but, finding his objections unavailing, he rode restlessly from hill to hill while I remained there.

The shore was strewn with logs of wood and withered branches, that presented something of a petrified appearance, but lighted into a fire with great facility. There was no shell, or fly, or any sign of life along the curving strand, which ran steeply to the water's edge, and consisted of very small and angular pebbles. It was bordered by a line of white, thick, creamy foam, though there was scarcely a ripple on the lake; and several streaks of a similar appearance lay upon the green and purple waters far away. The eastern shore, on the left-hand side, was bold and precipitous, and wore a dark blue colour, under the slanting rays of the morning sunshine: to the west, the Judean hills rose almost equally abruptly from the sea, and appeared of a brown or purple shade: to the south, the far shore was invisible, owing not so much to distance, as to an imperceptible mist brooding over the sea.

The Lake Asphaltites is about fifty miles in length, and ten or twelve in breadth: it lies utterly unexplored, in the heart of the most interesting scenes in the world; and, if nothing but tradition bespoke its origin, every appearance round would

vindicate its truth. It is said that, as in Lough Neagh —

> "By this sea's dark shore, as the wanderer strays,
> When the soft, bright eve 's declining,
> He sees the round towers of other days
> In the wave beneath him shining;"

and, on the only island in this sea, the remains of columns and other ruins are said to have been detected by the telescope.

My servant and I endeavoured to swim to this island: we found the effort very fatiguing, as the extreme buoyancy threw the feet into the air at every stroke: the temperature was delightful, and floating required no exertion; we could sit, stand, or even wade, in deep water, without trouble. Nevertheless, the water was so acrid, that when a drop touched the inside lip, or eye, or nostril, it seemed to burn like vitriol. We swam for about half a mile, but a slight breeze coming on, raised rippling waves that produced excruciating pain: we struggled on, however, for a short time; till the breeze freshening obliged us to return to the shore.

The Arabs now urged a hasty departure, and we had not proceeded far when the Sheikh halted, and placed his hand so as to shade his eyes; the loitering Bedouin stepped forward, and formed in a line before the luggage, keeping the step, and holding their muskets crossed upon their breasts. I rode up to the Sheikh, and he pointed out to me the

crimson and yellow kefiehs* of two Arabs, just over a small sand-hill; he then dashed forwards, and in a few moments we were by the side of the strangers. They proved to belong to a friendly tribe, and were only engaged in collecting brimstone; alarmed at our appearance, they were endeavouring to conceal themselves, when detected by the keen bright eye of our Sheikh.

Directing our course for the winding line of tamarisk and tall jungle, we came at length suddenly upon the Jordan, a rapid, muddy, treacherous-looking stream. The pilgrims profess here to recognize the spot by which the Israelites entered the Land of Promise, and that where John baptized; but I saw no appearance of a ford: it was about sixty yards wide, overhung by thick shrubs and tangling weeds, and anything but attractive. I sank up to my knees in its tenacious mud, and with great difficulty extricated myself, endeavouring vainly to stem the rapid torrent by swimming.

The Sheikh was now urgent to depart; and we rode away through a small tract of desert, covered with a salty incrustation like hoar-frost, and then entered a wilderness of beautiful shrubs in fruit and flower. The tamarisk, laurustinus, mimosa, and willow, were the only trees I recognized. The un-

* A thick silk handkerchief, tied over the head like a hood, with a weft of camel's hair, the distinguishing head-dress of the Bedawee.

derwood was very various, and quite unknown to me: one of the shrubs bore a small golden fruit about the size of a walnut, that hung temptingly on its bending branches; within, it was full of a black dust and a substance resembling cobweb. The Arabs called it "Bahr Lût limone" — *Lot's sea-orange;* but this is not the true apple of Sodom, which I have seen elsewhere in the desert: that is much larger, very fragile, and is full of cindrous-looking grains and a silken fibre.

In the midst of this beautiful wilderness, flowering shrubs in wild luxuriance tangled themselves into a shade for the soft green grass, and waved over the bright fountain of Ain Hajla, which well deserves its name — "The Diamond of the Desert." The costliest wine that ever sparkled over the thrilled palate of the epicure never gave such pleasure as the first draught of that cold, shining water to our parched mouths. Even the escort forgot their fear of the hostile tribes; and we all — Frank and Arab — flung ourselves down by the brink of the fountain, under the shade of the green willows, and drank, and bathed our hands and beards, and drank again until the Sheikh's entreaties prevailed, and set us once more in motion.

There is a fine ruin of a Greek convent, named Kusr Hajla, about two miles distant from the pathway; I cantered over to examine it, and, as I

emerged from its deserted courts, found the Sheikh, as usual, by my side. On asking the occasion of this strict watchfulness, he replied that he was responsible for my safety; that the old ruin was haunted by banditti, and, what was worse, by evil spirits!

About an hour afterwards we came in sight of a Saracenic castle partly in ruins, though a tent upon the roof showed it was still inhabited; it was seated on a gentle eminence, in a grove of fig-trees and acacias: close by was a village of Arab huts — this was Jericho!

My tent was pitched on a spot of green turf, close to a purling brook that flowed from Elisha's Well. On my left was the old castle, called by pilgrims (who love to turn everything to good account) the House of Zaccheus; to the right, under a thick grove, our horses were picketed, and the Bedouin were lying on the ground among them. The village of Riha (the name of Jericho is here unknown) lay behind — a collection of miserable mud-cabins; and one solitary date-tree alone remained to vindicate the epithet applied in Scripture to the "City of the Palm." *

The valley I had just traversed from the Jordan

* The Palm formerly abounded in Palestine; it is now very scarce. In Vespasian coins, Judea is beautifully typified by a disconsolate and lonely woman seated under a palm.

was the vale of Gilgal; to the southward lay the Dead Sea; to the north-east, the Mountain of the Temptation. The first is evidently fertile to exuberance: and, in the absence of more profitable employment, it gives birth to every variety of produce that is contented to grow wild. Were this vast valley inhabited by an industrious people, and the facilities for irrigation made use of, it might be one of the most productive in the world. The Sea of Galilee, about thirty miles distant, is elevated considerably above its level, and yet the vivifying waters of the Jordan are at present wasted on the thankless corpse of the Dead Sea.

"This sea has no appearance of volcanic origin. It merely occupies part of the great valley, or *crevasse*, that runs from the Lebanon almost to the Gulf of Akabah."* This absence of volcanic agency renders still more remarkable the appearances of some fierce, fiery ordeal, through which it must have passed.

We picked up several pieces of sulphur on the plain: there is a quantity of a dark stone, which, when broken, emits a smell of brimstone: the very core of the apples of Sodom is of so combustible a quality, that the Arabs use it as tinder for their matchlocks; and the Sea itself is a vast cauldron, in which the damned Cities of the Plain lie ever seething

* Von Buch's Letter to Dr. Robinson.

in salt brine, to whose simmering surface masses of bitumen ever and anon rise bubbling.

The range of the Hills of Moab, rising up suddenly from the eastern edge of the Dead Sea, is about two thousand feet in height; that of the Judean side opposite, about fifteen hundred. The Sea itself lies five hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean; it has no exit, except by means of evaporation, and varies in its level some ten or twelve feet, according to the nearness or remoteness of the rainy season.

Messsrs. Moore and Beke, who attempted to explore the Dead Sea, in 1837, found no bottom with 300 fathom of line, but their investigations were unfortunately soon interrupted; and Mr. Costigan, the only other person who succeeded in launching a boat upon these waters, has left no trace of his discoveries.

One or two spots on its shore are inhabited, such as Ain Jiddy, or Engedi, where fresh water flows from fountains; but, generally speaking, it is all as lonely as the grave. The remains of the town of Zoar are still visible on the Eastern hills, amongst which the race of Moab sprang from the daughters of Lot. It seems that there are whole tracts of hills composed of fossil salt to the south-east of this extraordinary lake; and they say, that when the riven soil gaped into fissures with the heat of the

conflagration, a mass of this salt was revealed to Lot, who took it for his missing wife!

Towards evening, I strolled into the courtyard of the old castle, where a Turkish garrison is quartered to protect the pilgrims, and check the inroads of the Bedouin from beyond the Jordan.

There was a marble fountain and reservoir of water here, at which the village girls were filling their jars. A range of stables occupied one side of the courtyard, and a shade of trellised vines hung over another. Beneath this, the Aga was sitting on his carpet with two or three of his officers; whilst others moved about in their wild, martial garb, with pistol in belt, and sword by side, as if momentarily expecting the trumpet's call. Such a scene unchanged might that old Crusader-castle have witnessed, six hundred years ago, when the Crescent had just displaced the Cross; and its fierce soldiery then, as now, were lounging about, or burnishing their arms beneath the shade of the forbidden vine.

I did not visit the Aga, being rather tired of governors, and pipes, and coffee, and common-places about England and fine brandy; I presume he was equally tired of Europeans, for he did not invade my solitude, or vouchsafe me any notice.

At night, the aspect of my bivouac was very

picturesque; the watch-fire, blazing among the dark, green shrubs, gleamed now upon the water, now upon the gay caparisons of the horses that remained standing and saddled all night. The Arabs slept round my tent, wrapped in their striped bernouses; nightingales were thrilling the dark groves with their song; and from the top of the tower came sounds of music and laughter, as the ladies of the Aga's hareem were enjoying the moonshine and the cool air of night. The Arab ladies of Jericho are said to be very fond of strangers' society, but St. Senanus might have been contented with the distant carriage they assumed in my case.

About three in the morning, I roused my sleeping people, who sprung to their feet with alacrity. In a few minutes, a little fire was made with dried leaves and twigs, ignited by tinder and a pistol-flash: then the coffee steamed and bubbled; and this, with a roll of bread, constituted our morning's repast. We seldom tasted any other food till sunset; but a cup of coffee always presented itself when we halted for half an hour throughout the day.

The good-humoured Bedouin vied with each other in loading the horses, and gratefully received a thimbleful of coffee as reward. We were in motion while the moon still threw our shadows eastward.

I passed through some glades and groves of

great beauty on my way to the adjoining mountains, but could detect no traces of where Jericho once stood, with her temples, palaces, and theatres. A curious mound, and a large, tank-like excavation, were the only disturbance of Nature's order of things that I observed.

At the approach of morning, the stir of life that seemed, like leaven, to ferment the surface of the world round, was very striking; first, the partridge's call joined chorus with the nightingale, and soon after their dusky forms were seen darting through the bushes, and then bird after bird joined the chorus; the lizards began to glance upon the rocks, the insects on the ground and in the air; the jerboa* peeping from its burrow, fish glancing in the stream, hares bounding over the dewy grass, and — as more light came — the airy form of the gazelle could be seen on almost every neighbouring hill. Then came sunrise, first flushing the light clouds above, then flashing over the Arabian mountains, and pouring down into the rich valley of the Jordan; the Dead Sea itself seemed to come to life under that blessed spell, and shone like molten gold among its purple hills.

I lingered long upon that mountain's brow, and thought that, so far from deserving all the dismal

* A pretty little animal, something between a rat and a rabbit in appearance and habits.

epithets that have been bestowed upon it, I had not seen so cheerful or attractive a scene in Palestine. That luxuriant valley was beautiful as one great pleasure-ground — its bosks and groves of aromatic shrubs, intermingled with sloping glades and verdant valleys: the City of Palms might still be hidden under that forest whence the old castle just shows its battlements: the plains of Gilgal might still be full of prosperous people, with cottages concealed under that abundant shade; and the dread sea itself shines and sparkles as if its waters rolled in pure and refreshing waves "o'er coral rocks and amber beds" alone.

The road from hence to Jerusalem is drear and barren, and nothing but Bethany occurred to divert my thoughts from dwelling on the beautiful DEAD SEA.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ARAB.

And he will be a wild man; his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. — *Gen.* xvi. 12.

The Arab is the hero of romantic history; little is known of him but by glimpses; he sets statistics at defiance, and the political economist has no share in him; for who can tell where the Arab dwelleth, or who has marked out the boundaries of his people! *

Since Abraham drove forth Hagar to the desert, his descendants have clung to their barren inheritance with a fierce fidelity. While the Israelite has tasted the luxury and the bitterness of all nations — triumphing and trampled on in turn — the Ishmaelite has gone down to his desert grave, generation after generation, unchanging and unsubdued.

The Bedawee** roams as freely over his boundless deserts as the winds that sweep them; the only barriers he knows are civilization and its settled

* We are told that Arabia is enclosed by the Euphrates, Ormuz, and the Persian Gulf; by Diarbeker, Irak, and Khuzestan; but this scarcely renders its locality less vague.

** *Bedouin* is the plural of Bedawee.

habitations. Tribes sunder and join as pastures become scarce or abundant: an oasis is to-day peopled with thousands, and covered with flocks and herds; to-morrow it is lonely as the sea.

And thus it has been with the Arab for three thousand years.

The Arab is so reverential towards antiquity of descent, that he sacrifices his own pride of birth to the abstract principle. He admits that he is but a *parvenu*, as only claiming origin from Ishmael, and calls himself "El Arab el Mostareba" — *the naturalized Arab.* The genuine ancient tribes are characterized as "El Arab," *par excellence*, and were denominated Ad, Thamud, Tasm, and Amalek, before Abraham was heard of.

Zarab, the grandson of Ebur, the great-grandson of Shem, gave his name to Yemen, over which country he was king; and his posterity continued to rule there until conquered and expelled by Ishmael. This patriarch married the daughter of Modad, one of the native princes; and his son Kedar obtained peaceable possession of the throne. After the expulsion of the ancient dynasty, the kingly spirit seems gradually to have given way to the patriarchal rule which the invaders had introduced; and the system of independent tribes soon universally prevailed. At Mecca, the management of affairs appears to have been vested in an aristocracy of the

tribe of Koreish, who strengthened their authority by the prestige attendant on their being "Guardians of the Caaba." *

The name of Saracen has been absurdly derived from their implacable stepmother Sarah; and also from the great desert, the Sahara; it was, in truth, an epithet of one of their most distinguished tribes, and adopted by the rest. During the stirring times of the Crusades, this name was almost exclusively applied to the Arab; and with it are connected some of the brightest associations that shine over war's dark annals in the times of chivalry.

The real Bedawee has little of historical interest; it is only when he has gone forth as a conqueror, that his annals assume a consistent or interresting form. His whole history when at home may be comprised in the fact, that he is to-day as he was in the days of Ishmael, unconquered and indomitable. Those of his race who approach the settled habitations endeavour to preserve as much as possible the character of their desert brethren; and though search for the means of subsistence may compel them occasionally to enter a town, they always do so with reluctance, and leave it like men escaping from captivity.

Their reverence for hospitality is one of the wild virtues that has survived from the days of the pa-

* See note 3, at the end of the volume.

triarchs, and is singularly contrasted, yet interwoven with other and apparently opposite tendencies. The Arab will rob you, if he is able; he will even murder you, if it suits his purpose; but, once under the shelter of his tribe's black tents, or having eaten of his salt by the way-side, you have as much safety in his company as his heart's blood can purchase for you.

The Bedouin are extortionate to strangers, dishonest to each other, and reckless of human life. On the other hand, they are faithful to their trust, brave after their fashion, temperate, and patient of hardship and privation beyond belief. Their sense of right and wrong is not founded on the Decalogue, as may be well imagined; yet from such principles as they profess they rarely swerve. Though they will freely risk their lives to steal, they will never contravene the wild rule of the desert. If a wayfarer's camel sinks and dies beneath its burden, the owner draws a circle round the animal in the sand, and follows the caravan. No Arab will presume to touch that lading, however tempting. Dr. Robinson mentions that he saw a tent hanging from a tree near Mount Sinai, which his Arabs said had then been there a twelvemonth, and never would be touched until its owner returned in search of it.

The Badawee women are under much less restraint than the Egyptian, and, like women every-

where else, are far more true to trust than to control; they do not cover their faces, and are not afraid to receive a stranger with courtesy and kindness. They live much in the open air, manufacturing cloth and camel's hair, milking their flocks, attending to the slight agriculture that their mode of life requires, and carefully tending their children. Their husbands seek a livelihood by attending or supplying caravans with camels, or by other less conventional dealings with travellers.

There is something very romantic in the Arab mode of life, which never seems to lose its zest; their love of the desert amounts to a passion, and every one who has wandered with these wild sons of freedom where all else are slaves, can understand the feeling. It is not to be imagined that in this desert there is only barren sand and naked rock; far different is the aspect that their picturesque encampments present. Small flowering shrubs and fragrant thickets diversify wide savannahs, on which dry, sunburnt grass only serves as shelter for soft and tender herbage: there the wild boar and the gazelle abound, and the partridge makes merry in his security. Wide tracts of desert intervene, it is true, between these isles of verdure; and, when they are to be crossed, preparations like those for the sailing of a fleet, are made for these "ships of the desert." Fearlessly they steer their way over these

trackless wilds, by the stars at night and by the sun by day: and when they have reached the spot to which they have traversed the desert, in the faith perhaps, of some tradition that spoke of verdure there, the Sheikh strikes his ostrich-tufted spear in the ground. Down kneel the camels; women, children, and luggage tumble off; soon the tents of the tribe start up in a circle, or in the form of a crescent round the Sheikhs; fires are lighted, bread is baking, and the Arab is as much at home in an hour as if he had been there for a generation.

For a few days or weeks — it may be even for a season — they remain in such encampment, driving their flocks each night into the enclosure, and perhaps foraging among the neighbouring tribes; sometimes a caravan is to be attacked; and then the men assemble in many thousands. When the pasture or the spring is exhausted, or when danger threatens, they are in motion at a moment's notice from their Sheikh; his spear is the last thing taken from the ground; the horsemen and armed warriors, on dromedaries, march in front; then come the flocks and herds; the she-camels, carrying the women and children, succeed in order, while their young gambol and browse by their sides as they proceed: finally, come the strong camels, laden with the tents and other baggage of the tribe.

Notwithstanding their boasted independence, Me-

hemet Ali's vigilant and stern power made itself felt wherever his name was known in Syria. Under the contemptible government of the Porte, however, the tribes have shaken off all the salutary awe which the Pasha had inspired; and, as I learn by a recent letter from Jerusalem, they now approach the very walls of the Holy City with impunity.

Literature they have none, but they nourish their romantic imaginations by oral tales, and poems, running down from very ancient times. The desert is full of superstitions, many of which are very poetical; and these help to keep alive the Moslem faith wherewith they are ingeniously blended.

At daybreak, the Sheikh shouts the muezzin call to prayer from the door of his tent; and it is a striking and solemn sight to witness that devout congregation — every man kneeling at the door of his tent, and prostrating himself in the dust with his face towards Mecca.

The wealth of the Arab consists in flocks and herds; but his pride and power lie in his horse.

These are noble animals, and are no less remarkable for their chivalrous disposition than for their strength and endurance: gallant, yet docile; fiery, yet gentle; full of mettle, yet patient as a camel: they are very ferocious to each other, but suffer little children to pull about and play with them. Their beauty is not remarkable — at least,

to an English eye. They seldom exceed fourteen and a half, or at most fifteen, hands in height; they have not good barrels; their chest is narrow, the pastern too much bent, and their quarters are seldom well turned. I only speak of these as defects in what would be considered symmetry in Europe; experience has proved to me that they argue no defect in Asia. The head is beautiful: the expansive forehead, the brilliant, prominent eye, and the delicately-shaped ear, would testify to nobleness in any animal; the high withers, and the shoulder well thrown back; the fine, clean limbs, with their bunches of starting muscle; and the silken skin, beneath which all the veins are visible, show proofs of blood that never can deceive.

The choicest horses come from the remoter parts of the desert, and cannot be said to have a price, as nothing but the direst necessity will induce their owners to part with them. There are three great classes recognised: the Kochlani, the Kadischi, and the Atteschi. The first are said to derive their blood from Solomon's stables, the second are of a mixed race, and the third have no claim to gentle breeding.

The Kochlani are, as may be supposed, extremely scarce, but a great deal of their blood is distributed among the nameless breeds; and I never saw an exception to docility, high spirit, and endu-

rance even among the hacks of Beyrout and Jerusalem. A friend of mine rode his horse from Cairo to Suez, eighty-five miles, in twelve hours, and, resting for twelve more, returned within the following twelve; during these journeys, the horse had no refreshment, except a gulp of water once to cool the bit. I have been on the same horse for twenty-four hours on one occasion, and for upwards of thirty on another, without any rest or refreshment, except once, for half an hour, when a few handfuls of barley were the only food. In both these instances, the horses never tasted water throughout their journeys.

Some of my young naval friends used to ride the same horses at a gallop almost the whole distance to Djoun and back, about sixty miles, over roads that would appear impossible to an English horse to climb. I only mention these instances as of daily occurrence. The horse of the true Nedjed breed will gallop, they say, one hundred and twenty miles without drawing a thick breath.

Nedjed is a mountainous country in the Hedjaz, not far from Mecca, which possesses the horse in the most perfect form known. The pedigrees of these animals are sometimes worn round their necks, but on such I should be inclined to look with suspicion; for in the remote regions of the desert, where alone the pure blood is to be found, writing

is unknown. Oral pedigrees, well borne out by the hieroglyphics of noble blood that may be read in the outward structure, so eloquent of the power within — these are the pedigrees most to be relied on. The mare is far more valued than the horse, as the Bedouin believe that the mother gives character to the race, and deduce the descent of the horse through the female line. The mare is also supposed to be capable of enduring greater fatigue, and to require less sustenance.

CHAPTER VII.

THE JEW.

The Hebrew nation is one great prophecy.

ST. AUGUSTINE.

But we must wander witheringly
 In other lands to die,
And where our father's ashes be,
 Our own may never lie:
Our temple hath not left one stone,
And mockery sits on Salem's throne.

BYRON.

Before I take leave of Jerusalem, I must add a few words concerning the race that is inhabitant in every country of the earth, and yet a stranger in them all.

"Wherever we have a Jew on the surface of the earth, there we have a man whose testimony and whose conduct connect the Present with the Beginning of all time."* In whatever point of view this chosen race is considered, it is by far the most remarkable of all those that inhabit earth. Their *completeness*, and wonderfully preserved individuality; their unequalled persecutions; their undying hope, and their proud confidence that they shall be yet

* Bishop Watson.

a great people — all these are characteristics peculiar to themselves.

They are scattered over every region of earth's wide surface; yet not only their physical but their moral traits are unchanged from the days in which their nation gathered round the temple.* Living illustrations of prophecy as they are, they refuse to believe in those which are fulfilled even in themselves, while they cling eagerly to those that yet continue in suspense. They have had their temple twice, their city six times, destroyed, yet they are as confident in their restoration as that the morrow's sun will rise. Prophecy seems to speak boldly and unambiguously upon this theme: "The Lord will yet have mercy upon Jacob, and yet will choose Israel, and set them in their own land." In the tenth chapter of Ezekiel, God declares plainly that he will take the Ten Tribes, and the Two Tribes, and unite them in His hand: that he will gather together the children of Israel from among the heathen on every side, and bring them into the land, and will make them a nation on the mountains of Israel.

The place where the Ten Tribes have lain concealed for 2,500 years is still a mere matter of con-

* "'I am the Lord — I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.' — *Mal.* iii. 6. If this was a marvel when Malachi prophecied, how much more is it a wonder now?" — *Alexander.*

jecture. Now we hear of them along the shores of the Caspian Sea; then among the American Indians; now among the warriors of Cochin,* and the fierce tribes of Affghanistan. It has been pretended that numbers of these lost tribes appeared in Jerusalem in the days of Augustus Cæsar, and thus incurred the responsibility of hearing the Messiah's voice, and of rejecting him as their Saviour and their King.**

Wherever the lost tribes may dwell, or whenever they may return to Jerusalem, they are to be preceded by the tribes of Judah.*** And surely when their summons is heard and answered by this widely scattered people, it will resemble that great and varied picture of the resurrection: with turbaned brow and floating robe — with lofty cap and Arctic furs — with forehead pale as the Siberian snows,

* There are two races of Jews settled along the coast of Malabar: the *black* and the *white*, as they are called. The former is the oldest, and is supposed to have wandered thus far East long before the destruction of Jerusalem: the latter, according to their own tradition, settled there soon after that catastrophe, and obtained various privileges from the native princes. They never were an independent nation: like the Christians of the neighbouring mountains (said to converts of St. Thomas), they had their own rulers, although they were tributary to the protecting states. Benjamin of Tudela speaks of a powerful tribe of Jews in the twelfth century, as living in the "Mountains of Lisboa, whence flows the river Gozen. They make warre upon the children of Chus, and travell in warfare through the desarts." — *Lord Lindsay; Buchanan's Christian Researches and Travels in Hindostan; Purchas's Pilgrims*, ii. 2, 1457.

** Jahn.

*** Zechariah xii. 7.

or dark as the Egyptian soil from whence they come.

There are perhaps fewer Jews in Palestine than in most countries in Europe. There is no rural Hebrew population there, though they have acquired both wealth and influence in Acre and Damascus. There are not probably in the whole of Syria above 30,000 souls: and they say their number on the whole earth is not above 6,000,000.

They are very zealous students of the Prophecies, and ingeniously distribute between Solomon and other heroes of their race the promises with regard to Shiloh that are absolutely fulfilled. Their hope of the Messiah is as strong as ever, and, in their prayers for the day of atonement, they have the exclamation, "Woe unto us, for we have no mediator!"

Hamburgh contains so many of this people, that it has been called the lesser Jerusalem; but Poland is the country wherein they mostly abound. Here they have stately synagogues, richly endowed colleges, and courts of judicature, even for criminal cases. In Hungary, the revenues were farmed by them until Ferdinand the Second published an edict forbidding their employment. In that country took place, in the year 1650, a most extraordinary assembly, convened to decide whether the Messiah was come or not. Three hundred Rabbis and an immense multitude of Jews assembled on the Plain

of Ageda. Some of the Rabbis expressed a wish to hear the Protestant divines upon the subject, but two Roman Catholic priests proposed to preach on their own account. When the latter spoke, there arose a stormy cry as of old in Jerusalem, "We will have no Christ! — no man-God! — no Virgin;" — and they tore their hair and rent their garments. The question being put to the vote, the majority of voices declared the Messiah *not* come. They voted also that his advent was only delayed by the sins and impenitence of the people.

Not only in civilized Europe, but even in their own Promised Land, the Jews can now find rest. It appears strange that not more "of the wandering foot and weary breast" seek refuge here, where all seems free to them. Once under the protection of a European power, property is here secure: and nowhere in the world, perhaps, would capital meet with a richer return than in Palestine. But all its prospects are agricultural; and the Jew has so long been accustomed to wander among the cities of the Gentiles, that he no longer desires "to sit under the shade of his own fig-tree, or to eat of his own vine."

Notwithstanding that the Jew is at once the object and the guardian of prophecy; the recipient, and the illustration of Scripture's promises and threats; there is, perhaps, no religious body that is

so little spiritual in its worship. Their pride, their trust, their hope, linger about the Land of Promise, above which it seldom seems to soar; or to rise, even now, beyond the temporalities for which they abandoned Him who declared that his kingdom was not of this world. It seems questionable whether the Israelites in the wilderness held the hope of immortality that is now almost disrespectfully familiar to our minds: it is true that in Job, the Prophets, and the Psalms, we have occasional intimations of such a hope, but the emigrants from Egypt had none of these.* The joys of Heaven never appear as a Mosaic doctrine, or even as a reward for righteousness; the Pentateuch does not refer to it; and it seems improbable that a leading article of belief would have been only darkly shadowed out in a Scripture intended as a rule of faith. Moreover, long afterwards, we find the Sadducees considered only as Dissenters, not as unbelievers in the Scriptures: when their founder, Zaduch, with his colleague, Rythos, introduced a schism among the adherents of the Oral law, Maimonides only speaks of them as having put a new construction on some of the articles of the Hebrew faith.

The Caraites are said to be a pure remnant of

* Unless, indeed, Moses composed the book of Job, as an allegory, among the scenes that it describes.

the Hebrews, — set apart as an example of what the Israelite was, and may become again. They abide scrupulously by the written law, rejecting the Talmud and Rabbinical explanations. There are many of this sect in Lithuania, and Wolff found 5000 of them at Bagdad, who were distinguished for veracity, and called "Children of The Book:" they are also found in the Crimea, where their character stands very high; they all understand Hebrew, and even speak it as a household language.

In speaking of Abyssinia, I have mentioned that its people are very much possessed in favour of the Jews; and, in speaking of the Arabs, I should perhaps have mentioned the Rechabites, or Midianites, supposed to be descendants of Jethro. This people, if they cannot be called Jews themselves, are very zealous for them, and profess their faith; they understand Hebrew, though their common language is the same as that of the other Arabs, by whom they are surrounded; they possess the Pentateuch, Isaiah, Kings, Samuel, and the lesser prophets; they amount to about 60,000 in number, dwell in tents, and "neither sow nor plant vineyards." They inhabit the fertile oases, whence they issue forth to levy contributions on Moslem travellers. Should a caravan approach their haunts, a horseman of their tribe suddenly presents himself and demands tribute.

Whether refused or not, he disappears as suddenly as he came; but in the former case, he returns with a storm of cavalry; in the latter, with a scribe, who writes a passport, and gives a receipt for the tribute-money. Mahomet defeated this tribe in several engagements, but made no converts among them: one of his female captives was so beautiful that she captivated her conqueror, and he proposed to marry her; but it is said that — dreading a worse fate, or emulous of the fame of Jael, who was of this heroic tribe — the captive girl poisoned her "inspired" lover.

"The Jews are spoken of in Revelations* as the 'Kings of the East:' if, indeed, the Affghans be of the Ten Tribes, this title may not be deemed too lofty for a nation which has held the thrones of Persia and Hindostan."** Seldom, however, any well authenticated Jews are found in the countries eastward of Palestine, though Morison speaks of having found some ancient families of them in China.

Although Jews are continually arriving to lay their bones in the ancestral sepulchres, their number is not at present on the increase. Riding one day in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, the progress of the party was arrested by a Jewish caravan, weary, wasted and overpowered with fatigue and misery.

* Chap. xiv. 21.

** I quote this, but I cannot remember whence I borrowed it.

They had no eyes but for the City, whose towers rose before them in the distance; while their hearts wandered over it, their feet stood still; the fathers held up their little children to gaze upon that shrine of Israel's faith, and tears flowed down their rugged cheeks and reverend beards. "Now," observed Bishop Alexander to me, "had an English traveller met this party, he would have taken away with him the impression that the gathering together of the Children of Israel was already begun; and it was not until I had met several such, and made particular inquiries, that I found such arrivals only served to replace those gone to rest in the Valley of Jehoshaphat."

It is a curious but well ascertained fact that the Jews do not multiply at present in the native city of their race; few children attain to puberty, and the mortality altogether is so great, that the constant reinforcements from Europe scarcely maintain the average population. They inhabit a quarter of the city between the Hill of Zion and the Temple, now the Mosque of Omar; most of their houses are mean in their external appearance, but, if I may judge from the only specimen of an interior that I saw, this outward show is very deceitful.

The synagogue is a new building, which Mehemet Ali permitted to be erected during his occupation of Jerusalem. It was very plain in its de-

corations, except an altar, ornamented by floral emblems, harps, sackbuts, and other ancient devices: a railing on the left marked out the place appropriated to females, and a number of old men were reading in silence at little tables in the unenclosed space, with little square black envelopes fastened on their foreheads. These are the frontlets spoken of in Scripture, and enjoined to be worn between the eyes.

I will not dwell longer on this subject: the Jew has no relation with either the Crescent or the Cross, and would scarcely belong to my subject, but for his antagonism towards both. The quarter of the city that his people occupies lies between our church on Zion and the Mosque of Omar on Mount Moriah, typical of his own position. It is somewhat vindicatory of his character that the same obstinacy with which he rejected the Cross has ever been sternly presented to the Crescent too.

The Jew should be seen at Jerusalem — still the native city of his race. There, if the missionary or the political economist can make little of him, he is, nevertheless, a striking specimen of man.

In the dark-robed form that lingers thoughtfully among the tombs in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, or bends with black turban to the ground at the "Place of Wailing," you seem to behold a Destiny incarnate. That fierce, dark eye, and noble brow;

that medallic profile, that has been transmitted unimpaired through a thousand generations and a thousand climates; these are Nature's own illustrations, and vindicate old history.

After Jerusalem, the pilgrimage of the Holy Land has lost its zest: I will not ask the reader's patience further on this theme, but ask his company once more to the Lebanon.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LEBANON.

On to the Mountain! To the Mountain Druses!
R. BROWNING.

Beautiful Beyrout! It is not only now, when seen through the Claude Lorraine glass of Memory, that I yield to thee the palm over all the cities of the earth. Exacting, indeed, must the spirit be that does not rest content with thy beauty, even while, lover-like, gazing on thee!

It is not only the magnificent scenery — the mountain, with its glens, like velvet folds, enclosing cascades like silver threads — the snowy peaks, the golden shore: nor the rich gardens that lie around the towered walls; the airy villages, with their silkworm-sheds; the purple sea, and the rose-coloured sky, that invest the old Berytus with such a glory. But the kindling associations that start up at every view; the old Phœnician fame; the Greek, the Roman, the Christian, the Crusader's memory: every wave that foams along the shore once heaved beneath the ancient argosies; every breeze now murmuring through the myrtle whispers of banners

once spread out over conquering armies; rich tresses that it toyed with of old in Paphian bowers.

For Cyprus is almost in sight: yon distant promontory shelters Tripoli; those waters have weltered among the prostrate towers of Tyre and Sidon.

You command in an hour every spot within your view. You clap your hands, and an eager Arabian champs his bit: you loose the rein, and, swift as thought, you are careering through the Pine Forest, or scaling the mountain's side, or traversing the border-land of Palestine: but with that we have done for ever — and now we mount for Lebanon. Before we revisit Beyrout, we shall have bivouacked on the plains of Baalbec, trodden the snows of Mount Hermon, quaffed the waters of Abana and Pharphar, and shared the hospitalities of the Princes of the Mountain.

I was awakened, one morning, by the sounds of sword and spur upon my staircase, and two young officers of the Vernon burst into my room, equipped for the mountains, and eager for the expedition.

The bustle of preparation is always an amusing excitement to witness, but it is more especially so previous to a Syrian expedition. A number and variety of necessaries is required for the journey: tents, carpets, arms, and cooking materials lie strewn about beneath the mulberry-trees; turbaned and scimitared servants are hurrying to and fro, pouring

forth torrents of imprecations and directions on the Arab guides and muleteers: the garden is full of horses and mules, neighing, snorting, and ringing their bells. Here a bottle of brandy is being carefully filled, there pistols are being loaded. Now an Arab gallops off on some errand to the city, and now a band of men and boys endeavour to load a kicking mule, with a chorus of execrations.

At length we are all mounted; the mules and guides move off, escorted by our three servants; and we only linger to take our "stirrup-cup" of coffee. Now the portly and long-bearded Antonio holds the stirrup, while Yussef hangs upon the Mameluke bit that scarcely controls the eager horse, whose expanded nostrils seem to snuff the desert air. The beautiful little Salomé hovers round the impatient brute, with pistols that have just received their polish from her delicate fingers. And now we are off! Beware, ye grave citizens — ye sedate travellers, of those wild sailors — a cloud of sand rises up among the cactus that overhang the narrow lane: it runs like the roll of musketry along the beach; now it subsides at the city-gates, and three young cavaliers emerge from it at a gentler pace as their cavalcade is overtaken.

After passing through the Pine Forest, we turned off to the left, and were soon climbing what resembled rather the dry bed of a mountain-torrent

than the high-road to the capital of Syria. As we advanced, the variety and extent of the view rapidly increased; each hill that we crowned revealed a noble panorama of the tract that lay between the mountains and the sea. On we went merrily: now among wild groves of myrtle and laurustinus; now emerging upon craggy cliffs, or descending into a green wilderness. Sometimes a forest of pines lent us a friendly shade; sometimes we passed through some flat-roofed village, receiving and returning the salutations of the Druse or Maronite maid or matron. The men were all out at labour on the mountain's side, which is admirably cultivated.

The change from the lowland vassal to the mountain freeman is very striking. The fearless look and bold bearing of the latter, joined to that respectfulness which so generally accompanies self-repect, showed in strong contrast to the slave-peasantry of Palestine. There would almost seem to be something geographically high in courage: the Tyrol, the Alps, and Pyrenees, the Circassians, the Affghan, and the Atlas mountains, have in all ages produced a hero peasantry; the low countries of the world, with the exception perhaps of Holland and poor Poland, have never been similarly endowed.

We rode, as it seemed, over the roofs of the picturesque village of Ananook, renowned for the beauty of its women. On the left hand, the cottages

stood up against the precipice; on the right, their roofs were level with the path, and looked out upon the valley far below. Occasionally, a fortress or a convent crowned a hill, or a hamlet peeped from beneath the foliage; but generally the way was wild and lonely. As soon as we crowned the summit of the Lebanon, the great valley of Cœlesyria opened on our view — a magnificent sweep of wide plains, watered by the Liettani, and richly varied by glade and forest, and piled-up cliffs. The descent was long and difficult and dangerous; but at length we came to the picturesque stream of the Damour, and halted at a khan by an old bridge. Here we bathed luxuriously in the bright mountain stream; and delightful it was to change the hot saddle and the labouring horse for that clear, sparkling water, flowing capriciously among shadowy rocks and flowering oleanders.

About sunset we arrived at the antique, crag-perched town of Derr el Kamar, and pitched our tent in an open space without the walls. The name of this stronghold of the Druses implies the "Monastery of the Moon," derived from the convent's dedication to the Virgin, who is represented as trampling on the Crescent.

There were 1,200 Turkish troops quartered here, to keep the Druses in check; and as we lay upon our carpets, looking down upon the glancing lights

that vaguely sketched out the town at our feet, the wild music of the Turkish drum and cymbals came pleasantly to our ears, and was re-echoed by the towering cliffs and rocky valleys round. A brilliant moon silvered the towers of Beteddeen, upon an opposite mountain peak; and the stars seemed reflected by the lights that gleamed confusedly among the precipices on which the Druses sought freedom and security, where the eagle and gazelle before had found them.

When daylight came, the town revealed itself, scattered as if it had been dispersed, and was striving to rally round the gloomy convent that gave it name. A deep ravine separated the rocky summit on which it stands from a similar one opposite, upon which stands Beteddeen,* the palace of the Emir Bescheer, the Prince of the Mountains. Both the steep sides of the hills were covered with terraces supporting soil, on which a well-earned harvest was waving among olive plantations, and watch-towers, and wine-presses. A sparkling river ran below, and the beautiful palace crowned the view above. Imagine the Isola Bella, with all its gardens, terraces, and pavilions, upheaved from the Lago Maggiore and placed like a crown on a majestic mountain-brow — and you have Beteddeen.

* I know not how this palace has obtained this name in English; in the country it is always called *Ipteddeen*.

The path between the palace and the town is so steep and rugged that no English horse, with the most cautious guidance, could safely travel it in an hour, yet the bold cavaliers of the mountain traverse it at speed.

Industry has here triumphed over apparent impossibilities: in Palestine, we had just left vast tracts of country teeming with richness unemployed, and fertility left to waste. Here was the mountain's rugged side clothed with soil not its own; and, watered by a thousand rills, led captive through rocky channels from the cataracts far off; every spot on which soil could rest, or vine could cling, was in cultivation. As we rode up to the palace, olive-plantations and fig-trees gave us shade, lines of corn waved along hewn terraces, streams gushed from gardens, and then leaped foaming over the rocky road to water others far beneath: all spoke of energy, industry, and activity. And then the villages we passed through had each of them a marble fountain, with its sculptured reservoir, round which were grouped the turbaned traveller, with his camels, or his gaily-caparisoned mules; girls with their water-jars; old gossips with their pipes and their garrulity, and children with their laughter and their sports, that are the same all the world over.

After a steep ascent, we passed into the palace between Turkish sentries, and made fast our horses

in one of the vast, vaulted stables, that formerly held the Emir's stud of five hundred horses. These lined one side of a spacious court-yard, whose battlemented walls looked out upon Derr el Kamar — the richly varied mountain-land below, and the sea afar off. Thence we ascended a flight of broad marble steps to another court-yard, where big-breeched soldier-grooms were leading horses to and fro, and a parade of Turkish troops was going on. On the left of this enclosure was a very picturesque portal of light Saracenic architecture, leading to the Hall of Audience and the private apartments of the Emir. This was finely carved, and painted in the Eastern style; a fantastic-looking gilded crown, something between a lantern and a diadem, was suspended from the roof.

The commanding officer was still in bed, and the others, whom we met walking about, showed little inclination towards civility. Producing the Sultan's firman, I informed the officer on guard that our business (that of amusing ourselves) was urgent, and that we had no time to lose. Straightway the commander was roused up, and came out, half awake and half dressed, to the cloisters where we stood; then, making us some civil speeches, he sent a ghastly-looking lieutenant to show us over the palace. Although this has been turned into a barrack for 1000 Turkish troops, who have kept garrison

here for two years, it is in perfect preservation; and we could not help thinking, as we wandered through marble halls on which the shaggy soldiers lay thickly strewn in their capotes, what a different appearance it would have presented after even a week's occupation by the troops that have *colonized* Algiers.

There was an extensive labyrinth of halls and chambers, richly gilded and arabesqued: the floors were for the most part paved with mosaic marble, and every apartment was divided into two platforms of different height: the lowest is called the *Leewān*, where the servants stand and wait; the upper has a divan, or wide, low, cushioned benches, running round the walls: there is no other approach to furniture, and in winter, among these snowy mountains, all this magnificence must look rather more than cool. Some of the marbled apartments led out upon pretty gardens, shaded with cypresses, myrtles, and lemon-trees: in one stands a handsome but simple monument to the banished Emir's wife. She was very fond of these gardens; and while war raged in the valleys round, she passed the greater part of her life among the flowers that now bloom over her quiet grave.

Having examined the Palace, we were ready for the bath, and found the magnificent suite of rooms appropriated to that purpose ready to receive us. We were first conducted into a beautiful pavilion of

pale-coloured marble, in the centre of which crystal streams leaped into an alabaster basin from four fountains. Vases of fresh flowers were tastefully arranged round the carved edges of the basin; a ceiling of soft green and purple porcelain reflected the only light that fell upon this pleasant place.

A Turkish bath is a very complicated business, but, as it is one of the greatest luxuries of the East, and indeed almost a necessary of life, it is fit to give some description of it: — this will apply equally to all, from Cairo to Constantinople. As soon as we laid aside our clothes, attendants brought long napkins, of the softest and whitest linen, which were wreathed into turbans and togas round us: then, placing our feet in wooden pattens, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, we walked on marble floors through several chambers and passages of gradually increasing heat, until we reached a vaulted apartment, from whose marbled sides gushed four fountains of hot water. Here cushions were laid for us, and we were served with pipes, and nargilehs, and iced sherbets: thence we were conducted into the innermost and warmest apartment, where we sat down on marbled stools, close to fountains of almost boiling water. This was poured over us from silver cups; we were then covered with a rich foam of scented soap, applied with the silken fibres of the palm, then bathed again with the warm water and

shampooed, in which process the whole skin seemed to peel off, and every joint was made to crack. Then we were again lathered, and again soused, and found our skins as flower-soft as that of a little child. We now left the warmest room, and were met at the door by slaves, with bundles of exquisitely soft, warm linen, in which we were again shawled, turbaned, and kilted: and so we passed out into the cool fountain chamber, where another change of linen awaited us.

It was a sudden and pleasant alternation, from burning suns, and craggy roads, and sweltering horses, to find ourselves reclining on silken cushions, in the shaded niche of an arched window; through which cool breezes, filled with orange perfumes, breathed gently over us. The sensation of repose after a Turkish bath is at all times delicious; but here it was heightened by every appliance that could win the tranced senses to enjoyment, without disturbing their repose. The bubbling of fountains, the singing of birds, the whispering of trees, were the only sounds that reached the ear. The slaves glided about silently and somnambulistically, or stood with folded arms watching for a sign. If the languid eye was lifted to the window, it found a prospect of unequalled splendour over the mountains to the sea; and nearer were rich gardens, and basins full of gold fishes, swimming about with such luxurious motion

that it rested the sight to follow them. There were amber-mouthed pipes of delicious Latakeea, and fragrant coffee, and sherbet cooled in the fountain; and black slaves, with gold-embroidered napkins to wipe our hands.

This was too pleasant to last long; the soft slippers gave way to the heavy boot, the light turban of the serai to that of the mountain; a shower of rose-water was sprinkled over us; we took a last view of the spacious courts, with their long array of cloisters, built lightly and gracefully, as if in bowers; the princely pile of Saracenic elegance that surmounted these, and the vaulted stables that supported them; and then we dashed away at a gallop, with more of grudge than gratitude towards our usurping entertainers.

The ancient hospitality of Beteddeen was very magnificent, but the Emir Bescheer, who exercised it, is now a prisoner at Constantinople. We hastily visited his two smaller palaces in the neighbourhood, with pretty court-yards and shadowy arcades, and marble fountains. These were intended by the old Emir for his mother and his eldest son; they are now garrisoned with Turkish troops.

We broke away over the mountains at a gallop where it seemed too steep to walk. We had sent on our servants early, and soon lost our way; but still we pushed on, though it was a wild country

to ride a steeple — or rather a mosque — chase in. We came at last upon a beautiful little village, clinging to the side of a precipice, with cascades gushing through its streets, and overarching some of them. Here we found ourselves in the right way once more; and our way henceforth for some hours lay through scenery perhaps unparalleled in beauty. All the picturesque and imposing — all the awful, yet winning effect, that hill and vale and water can produce, are here. Torn mountains, black precipices, thundering torrents, yawning rifts, soft, sunny glades, pale green vineyards, wide-spreading forests, flat-roofed cottages, sparkling rills, terraced cultivation, and a brilliant sky over all — leave nothing for the painter's, or even the poet's eye to desire.

We climbed and scrambled up many a weary mountain on which the sun shone fierce and shadowless; and on, through many a gloomy gorge and deep valley of richest verdure, until sunset found us at the most beautiful spot in Syria — the little village of Gezeen. We had long seen it nestling in its rich plantations from the mountain-path along which we rode, but the descent was so winding and precipitous, that it required hours to reach it.

As we rode through the village of Gezeen, the people ran to their doors and the roofs of their houses, and gave us kindly salutation. When we passed through, we came to a little grassy dell,

watered by a sparkling stream that flowed beneath the shade of spreading trees. We found the tent pitched under a majestic sycamore: no sight could be more picturesque or more welcome to weary travellers. A blazing fire under a neighbouring cliff shot up sparks through the myrtles; and round it sat a number of villagers in their vivid and varied attire, contrasted with the dark robes of two Maronite priests belonging to the adjacent convent. They all rose as we approached, and greeted us with cordiality: as we sat at the door of our tent after dinner, they seated themselves round us in a ring, asking questions, and listening with avidity to all they heard.

The next morning we were awakened by the pleasant tones of the church-bell ringing to matins, and soon afterwards the valley was full of men, women, and children, passing to prayer. We started soon after sunrise; and, after travelling some hours, arrived at the river Liettani, winding slowly among green banks sheltered by poplars and sycamores in a deep dell, surrounded by steep cliffs and towering mountains. Thence emerging over another chain of hills, we saw a wide, peaceful-looking valley, through which the young Jordan was flowing between ranks of poplars. Fording this stream, we ascended by a steep and rugged path to the village of Hasbeya, in front of whose precipitous site stands the Palace of the Emir Sadadeen. The sources of the Jordan

are here, and we found groups of village girls filling their water-jars at its sacred fountain.

We rode up a flight of stone steps under an archway, into a large quadrangular court, with a cistern in the midst. On one side was a range of stables, open, as are all the stables in this country, to the air; opposite was a high wall, loopholed, and looking down into a steep valley; within rose an incongruous and picturesque pile of halls and towers, almost equalling Kenilworth in extent.

No part of this palace has any pretensions to either strength or beauty, and I was not a little disappointed at the air of poverty, discomfort, and decay, that pervaded this princely residence. On the south side, the village of Hasbeya, bosomed in trees, ran down the hill-side to the very walls; on the north, a deep ravine yawned between them and the opposing mountain. We were told that the Emir was out upon the Hills; but on stating that we had a letter of introduction to him, we were requested to put up our horses and make ourselves at home.

We ascended several flights of stairs, and, passing through some dirty, ruinous passages, came to a flat roof, over which a mat was suspended, as an awning, upon poles. This was the Emir's drawing-room: we sat down upon the ground, and were soon engaged in familiar conversation with a merchant

from Bagdad and some of the village authorities, who were waiting for the prince.

Refreshments were brought in on a pewter tray, and placed upon a little stool; they consisted of sour milk, with celery and cucumbers chopped therein; curds and whey, with mint strewn over it; bread and cheese. Hunger made us swallow this uninviting fare with avidity, and just then the servant shouted, "Look, look!" and pointed to the brow of the opposite hill. There was the Emir on horseback, surrounded by a well armed and goodly company of sons and followers, in blue and crimson jackets, riding in files along the narrow path.

Walpole and I now hastened to dress, and were shown into a large, gloomy apartment, which we fancied was the harness-room, or the servants' hall. Just as we were undressed, in walked the Emir himself — we were in his hall of audience! He was accompanied by an imposing-looking train of village elders, who took their seats according to their respective ranks, round the room upon the floor; they had all long beards and flowing robes, and formed a very reverend-looking senate. Our costume was much more adapted for the couch of repose than for a "lit de justice;" and the difficulty may be imagined, with which we preserved our gravity, on being presented, under such circumstances, to the Emir and his court.

The Emir Sadadeen is a handsome man of about sixty years of age; his countenance showed a want of energy or talent, but was gentle, yet commanding-looking. After some conversation with us, he proceeded to business, and heard and settled disputes until dinner was announced: then we all rose, and returned to the terraced roof, on which we again took our places under the mat canopy. A little stool was again placed in our circle, and on it a large pewter tray, in the centre of which was an immense wooden bowl of rice stewed in grease; round this were six or seven little earthenware dishes, containing stewed liver, sausages, a sort of rissole wrapped in vine-leaves, and some other abominations; we had no plates or knives and forks, but each guest was supplied with a large flat cake of barley bread and a wooden spoon.

We took a stroll after dinner to the fountains of the Jordan, to see the women drawing water, and were then shown to our sleeping-room, the eternal divan. Here my servant got us some tea and toast of our own, and we lay down upon the marble floor to take such sleep as swarms of fleas would permit.

The next morning, before sunrise, we were told that the Emir was coming; so we were obliged to make a hasty breakfast and toilet, while he was waiting in the cloister. Again he took his seat on the divan. All the village elders were again as-

sembled round him; and, after the compliments of the morning, he proceeded to transact business. Soon afterwards, we took our leave, and departed.

This Emir exercises feudal hospitality after the fashion of our olden times, and we probably saw in this comfortless castle scenes similar to what England witnessed five hundred years ago.

We traversed a wide mountain district for some hours; and, leaving Mount Hermon on our right, we came to the palace of Emir Afendi, in the midst of the precipitous village of Rascheia. Several horses were picketed in the courtyard below, whence we ascended by about twenty steps to another court, which was flagged and shaded by a noble sycamore; along the left ran a lofty gallery, open in front, in a corner of which sat the venerable Emir, with a snow-white beard, and a spotless turban of embroidered muslin. On presenting our letters, we were received with great civility, and assured that the palace, with all that it contained, was at our disposal. This expression of politeness was at the same time enhanced and neutralized by a constellation of bright eyes, that twinkled from the latticed hareem. We were then allowed the privilege of dining by ourselves in a small and dark apartment; but the Emir's physician, followed by a crowd of mountain warriors and servants, soon invaded our privacy, and squatted round us on the dirty

floor, eagerly examining and asking for everything that we possessed. The physician sold us some antique arms, and the Emir himself afterwards disposed of some old coins for a "consideration." One only of the Emir's family was at home, a fat jolly-looking young Arab, with a very knowing eye. He showed us a couple of fine falcons, but we could not prevail upon him to take them to the field: he said they never hawked until September, in consideration of the young partridge and gazelles. Imagine game-laws on Mount Hermon!

The next morning before daylight, we set off for the summit of Djebel Sheikh, the "Chief of the Mountains:" this is the highest point of Syria, the last of the Anti-Lebanon range, and better known as the ancient Hill of Hermon. We rode through some rugged valleys and tracts of vineyards, and, leaving our horses at one of the sheds in the latter, began the steep and laborious ascent. I have ascended most of the usual mountains, but this was far the heaviest work of all:* we found, moreover, to our great disappointment, that there was not a drop of water to be had upon our route. The snow

* Our guide had been directed by his chief to take us to the top of the mountain, and, with a single-minded fidelity, he was determined to fulfil his hest. If he thought we lingered or hesitated, he threw himself into an attitude that made one great finger-post of him, and shouted "Foke! Foke!" — (*To the top! to the top!*) We often afterwards used this as a "cri de guerre."

is perpetual on the summit of the mountain, but only lies in streaks in summer. When we arrived at the first tract, it only mocked our thirst, yielding just as much moisture as our lips could melt. Our guide broke off large masses, and placing them in the sun, a precious little rivulet trickled down into our parched mouths.

After six hours' toilsome journey, we stood upon the summit, and perhaps the world does not possess a more magnificent view than that which we then beheld.

We looked down from the Hill of Hermon over the Land of Israel. The mountain fell away in many a hill and valley to what seemed a perfect plain below. There gleamed the bright blue sea of Galilee, and nearer, bosomed by the last of the mountain undulations, was Lake Hooly, with Banias, the ancient Dan, upon its banks. This vast and varied plain, on which lay mapped a thousand places familiar to the memory, was bounded on the right by the Mediterranean, whose purpled waters whitened round Sidon, Tyre, and the distant Promontorium Album, over which just appeared the summit of Mount Carmel: on the left of the plain a range of hills divided the Haouran (the country of Bozrah and Djerash) from Samaria. Further on, towards the Eastern horizon, spread the plain of Damascus, and the desert towards Palmyra.

To the north, the wide and fertile valley of Bekaa lay between the two great chains of the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon; the latter of whose varied hills and glens, specked with forests and villages, lay beneath my feet. Nothing but lakes were wanting to the valleys, nothing but heather to the mountains. All was naked on the latter, except where the snow mantled upon the heights; beneath it there was not even a patch of moss or lichen to clothe the rugged rock.

We caught some goats after a hard chase, and, milking them on the snow, drank eagerly from this novel dairy. Soon afterwards, we found a little fountain gushing from a snowy hill; and only those who have climbed a mountain 9000 feet high, under a Syrian sun, can appreciate the luxury of such a draught as that cool, bubbing rill afforded.

As we descended, the views seemed to multiply, and the clearness of the atmosphere enabled us to see as far as the diminution of objects would allow. Rascheia lay far beneath us, like scattered dominoes, and the cultivated valleys looked like strips of the Cameronian plaid. We tried, unsuccessfully, to "stalk" some gazelles on our way down, and it was late when we reached our quarters. Walpole was here advised to leave me, and the Emir advised me to wait until the next morning, to pursue

my journey, as the roads were unsafe. My apprehensions of danger, however, whatever they might once have been, were by this time considerably blunted; and, as I feared the Emir's fleas more than his freebooters, I prepared to depart.

He then offered me an escort, which I also declined, and set out alone on my road to Damascus. The way was very solitary, lying for the most part between barren mountains, broken by frequent precipices, amongst which we soon lost our way. Whilst hesitating what direction to move in next, the moon suddenly disappeared, and it became so dark that we were obliged to lie down for the night where we were, tying our horses to our feet. The muleteer removed the bells from their necks, lest their sound should attract the robbers of whom we had been warned.

CHAPTER IX.

DAMASCUS.

From the land where our masters no longer can task us,
I shall see the rich forest that waves o'er Damascus;
From the peaks of high Lebanon, sacred and hoary,
I shall look o'er that country, and think of its glory.
SIR J. HANMER.

Day dawned upon our rocky couch in a couple of hours. We had been sleeping under our horses, and they had never stirred a limb for fear of hurting us.* The evening before, our path had lain among bosomy hills, and quiet-looking, drab coloured valleys. This scenery, if not attractive, was at least inoffensive; and when daylight came, and we found where we had wandered to, the change was great indeed. It seemed as if some great battle of the elements had taken place during the night; the rocks been rent asunder in the struggle, and Nature ghastlily wounded in the fray. Wildly distorted as the scenery seemed when the sun shone over it, there was a fearful silence and want of stir that enhanced its effect. Cliffs nodded over us as if they had been awake all night and could stand it

* The "dew of Hermon" fell so heavily during the night, that it ran off our capotes in rivulets, when we shook them.

no longer; precipices and dark ravines yawned beneath us, fixed, as it were, in some spasm of the nightmare. Not a living thing was to be seen around, no drop of water, no leaf of tree — nothing but a calm, terrible sunshine above, and blackened rocks and a burnt soil below.

We emerged from these savage gorges into a wide, disheartening plain, bounded by an amphitheatre of dreary mountains. Our horses had had no water for twenty-four hours, and we no refreshment of any kind for twenty. Finding there was still a gallop in my steed's elastic limbs, I pushed on for Damascus, leaving my people to follow more slowly. After a couple of hours' hard riding, I came to another range of mountains, from beyond which opened the view of Damascus, that the Prophet abstained from, as too delightful for this probationary world.

It is said that after many days of toilsome travel, beholding the city thus lying at his feet, he exclaimed, "Only one Paradise is allowed to man; I will not take mine in this world;" and so he turned away his horse's head from El Shām, and pitched his tent in the Desert.

I reined up my steed with difficulty on the side of the mountain; he had already, perhaps, heard the murmur of the distant waters, or instinct told him that Nature's life-streams flowed beneath that bright

green foliage. For miles around us lay the dead desert, whose sands appeared to quiver under the shower of sunbeams: far away to the south and east it spread like a boundless ocean: but there, beneath our feet, lay such an island of verdure as nowhere else perhaps exists. Mass upon mass of dark, delicious foliage rolled like waves among garden tracts of brilliant emerald green. Here and there, the clustering blossoms of the orange or the nectarine lay like foam upon that verdant sea. Minarets, white as ivory, shot up their fairy towers among the groves, and purple mosque-domes, tipped with the golden crescent; these gave the only sign that a city lay bowered beneath those rich plantations.

An hour's gallop brought me to the suburban gates of Mezzé, and thenceforth I rode on through streets, or rather lanes, of pleasant shadow. For many an hour we had seen no water: now it gushed, and gleamed, and sparkled all around us; from aqueduct above, and rivulet below, and marble fountain in the walls — everywhere it poured forth its rich abundance; and my horse and I soon quenched our burning thirst in the streams of Abana and Pharphar.

On we went, among gardens, and fountains, and odours, and cool shade, absorbed in sensations of delight, like the knights of old who had just passed from some ordeal to its reward. Fruits of every

delicate shape and hue bended the boughs hospitably over our heads; flowers hung in canopy upon the trees, and lay in variegated carpet on the ground; the lanes through which we went were long arcades of arching boughs; the walls were composed of large square blocks of dried mud, which in that bright, dazzling light somewhat resembled Cyclopean architecture, and gave I know not what of simplicity and primitiveness to the scene. At length I entered the city, and thenceforth lost the sun while I remained there. The luxurious people of Damascus exclude all sunshine from their bazaars by awnings of thick mat, wherever vine-trellises or vaulted roofs do not render this precaution unnecessary.

The effect of this pleasant gloom, the cool currents of air created by the narrow streets, the vividness of the bazaars, the variety and beauty of the Oriental dress, the fragrant smell of the spice-shops, the tinkle of the brass cups of the seller of sherbets — all this affords a pleasant but bewildering change from the silent desert and the glare of sunshine. And then the glimpses of places strange to your eye, yet familiar to your imagination, that you catch as you pass along. Here is the portal of a large khan, with a fountain and cistern in the midst. Camels and bales of merchandize and turbaned negroes are scattered over its wide quadrangle,

and an arcade of shops or offices surrounds it, above and below, like the streets of Chester. Another portal opens into a public bath, with its fountains, its reservoirs, its gay carpets, and its luxurious inmates, clothed in white linen, and reclining upon cushions as they smoke their chibouques.

In the luxury of a Turkish bath I soon forgot the fatigue of a thirty hours' journey, and even my horse (he, however, had been resting while I was climbing Mount Hermon) soon recovered his spirits and condition. After breakfast, the first food or drink I had tasted for twenty-four hours, I went to visit Mr. Wood, the British Consul. His hospitable house is one of the handsomest in Syria, though you enter it from a dull street, through a low and unpretending portal. A group of janissaries and other servants were lounging about the small outer court, whence I passed into a garden, round three sides of which the apartments ranged. A little lake of crystal water lay enclosed by marble banks; and overshadowed by beautiful weeping willows; little fountains leaped and sparkled in all directions, "and shook their loosened silver in the sun." Arcades of orange, and lemon, and mimosa-trees afforded a quivering shade to the marble mosaic paths and the parterres of flowers. At one end of this court, or garden, was a lofty alcove, with a ceiling richly carved in gold and crimson fretwork; the walls are

ornamented with arabesques, and a wire divan runs round the three sides of the apartment, which opens on the garden and its fountains. Next to this alcove is a beautiful drawing-room, with marble floor and arabesque roof, and carved niches, and softened light falling on delicately-painted walls; in the midst is an alabaster basin, into which water falls from four fantastic little fountains.

Mr. Wood appears to have extensive influence among the Arabs, and much consideration among the Turks. He has travelled very widely in the East, and understands its various people well. I would gladly enliven these pages with some of his most interesting anecdotes and information, but for the character of confidence that every private conversation possesses, or should possess.

After one night's trial of the hotel, the traveller will be glad to remove to the Franciscan convent, which, though squalid enough, is comparatively free from vermin. The terrace, too, upon this convent, commands the best view perhaps of the city, and, on a moonlight night, is the most pleasant place imaginable to smoke "the pipe of repose." The fathers, moreover, are jovial fellows, and possess a capital cellar of the "Vino d'oro," for which the Lebanon is famous.

I thought Damascus was a great improvement upon Cairo, in every respect. It is much more thoroughly Oriental in its appearance, in its myste-

ries, in the look and character of its inhabitants. The spirit of the Arabian Nights is still quite alive in these, its native streets; and not only do you hear their fantastic tales repeated to rapt audiences in the coffee-houses, but you see them hourly exemplified in living scenes.

Damascus is all of a bubble with nargilehs and fountains; the former are in every mouth, and the latter gush from every corner of the street. These fountains are in themselves very characteristic, beautifully carved with fanciful designs, that seem ever striving to evade the Moslem's law against imitating anything in creation. The heat of the climate is turned into a source of pleasure, by the cool currents of air that are ingeniously cultivated, and the profusion of ices, creams, and juicy fruits that everywhere present themselves. Many of the shopkeepers have large feather fans, which are in constant flutter; and even the jewellers, as they work in public, turn aside from the little crucibles, in which ingots of gold or silver are learning ductility and obedience to art, to fan their pallid cheeks and agitate their perfumed beards with these wide-spread fans.*

* The celebrated sword-blades are no longer manufactured here. The trade was transferred to Khorassan by one of the many conquerors that have ravaged this fair city. The steel was "cut as fine as horsehair, and interwoven with gold as finely drawn as woman's tresses," then subjected to fire, till each metal became imbued with

The rides about Damascus are very striking and pleasant. You wander through a labyrinth of sycamore or walnut-shaded lanes, with bright Abana and Pharphar gleaming through the foliage, or sparkling in stream or fountain. Sometimes you find a picturesque mill terminating the path that has led you wandering, and sometimes you come upon a group of Syrians smoking indolently in an arbour, or rushing about like maniacs on active horses, that seem to enjoy their wild game of the Jereed as much as their riders. There is little to be seen in Damascus, except the city's self. No vestige remains of the palaces of the Sultans; and, indeed, few of any other antiquity, though this is probably the most ancient city in the world: Eleazer, the trusty steward of Abraham, was a citizen of it nearly 4,000 years ago, and the Arabs maintain that Adam was created here out of the red clay that is now fashioned by the hand of the potter into other forms.

Damascus life begins very early in the morning, and the shops are almost all closed by one or two o'clock in the afternoon: thenceforth the cafés and the gardens become filled, and, after sunset, you seldom meet any one in the streets; the few who appear there are obliged to carry lanterns, and the

the virtues of the other, and the blade would cut gossamer as it floated in the air.

different quarters of the town are enclosed by guarded gates.

The women of Damascus are said to be very handsome, and I think deserve this, as well as other less complimentary reputations. They affect a deep seclusion, like the Cairenes, and are more ingenious perhaps in evading its restrictions. The Turks here are more fanatical than in any part of the East, except Mecca; and it is nearly impossible to visit the mosques: the risk incurred in doing so is of that unpleasant kind that has nothing redeeming or tempting in its exploit. These mosques are inhabited by a set of filthy dervishes, who assail a Christian with every sort of insult and outrage, even if protected by the Sultan's firman and the Pasha's officers.

The Christians for the most part, belong to the Latin Church: there are some Greeks, and a few Armenians; they amount in all to about 5,000, out of a population of 100,000. They are as fanatical and grossly ignorant as the Moslems — at least, those few, even of the wealthier class, with whom I had an opportunity of conversing. The Jews amount to 6 or 7000, and have the reputation of great wealth.

I made the acquaintance of an Arab physician, who was possessed of considerable wealth, and was, moreover, a person of literary attainments, and ap-

parently free from the prejudices, if not from the belief, of the Koran. I accepted an invitation to visit him one evening: and, after traversing many silent streets, with guarded gates at either end, I arrived at one of the low and unpretending doorways I have mentioned.

I was admitted by a black slave, and ushered through a long dark passage into a courtyard, which presented a very striking appearance; in the midst, the usual fountain leaped and sparkled in the rays that, falling from a painted lantern, converted each drop of spray into rubies or emeralds. Mimosas, hanging their flowery wreaths, and orange-trees bending with their golden fruit, stood round, themselves shadowed by some tall luxuriant palms. On one side, many lights twinkled in the lattices of the hareem; on the other rose a wide alcove, with fretted roof, and a raised marble floor. The Divan was occupied by some gorgeously-clad Turks, some merchants, and two Armenian priests in violet robes, and high black turbans. A large painted lantern threw its coloured light upon this picturesque and imposing group.

The circle, except the priests, rose as I entered, and remained standing until I had taken my seat; then, resuming theirs, each laid his hand upon his heart, and, bowing slowly, muttered something about Allah. A pipe was then presented, and, ac-

cording to the pleasant Eastern usage, no observation was addressed to me until I had time to become familiarized with the appearances that surrounded me.

My host was a noble-looking fellow, with piercing eyes and a long black beard; yet his countenance wore an expression of mirth and good-humour, that contrasted curiously with that reverend beard and lofty look. A long robe of dark flame-coloured silk was wrapped round his waist by a voluminous shawl, and a white muslin turban was folded broadly on his forehead.

He held a conversation (through an interpreter*) with great animation and interest on European topics, inquiring about steam, chemistry, and railways. When I observed that almost all our knowledge of chemistry and astronomy came originally from his country, he said that the Arab science was only like *water* when it came to us in Frangistan: "you put fire under it and turn it into *steam*. Ah, yes!" he continued, "you English know all things, and can do what you please; you know more of us than we do of ourselves."

* Mr. Paton, an English gentleman, to whom I was indebted for this and other facilities, which his perfect knowledge of Arabic, and popularity among the Arabs, enabled him kindly to offer to me. He has recently published a very valuable little volume, entitled "The Modern Syrians."

After some conversation on medical subjects, he inquired very eagerly about magnetism, and begged that I would show him how it is done. Vainly I disclaimed any knowledge of the art: his enthusiasm on the subject was not to be evaded, and, at last, I consented to explain the simple process.

He beckoned to a black slave, who was standing by with folded arms, to approach; and, as the gaunt negro knelt before me, the whole circle closed round us, and looked on in breathless suspense, while I passed my hands slowly over my patient's eyes. Soon and suddenly, to my surprise and their astonishment, a shudder passed over the gigantic frame, and he sank upon the ground, huddled like a black cloak that has fallen from a peg. A low exclamation of "Wallah!" escaped from all the bystanders, who, one by one, endeavoured to waken him, but in vain. At length, they said quietly, "He is dead," and resumed their pipes and their pleasant attitudes on the divans, as if it was all quite "regular." My host was beside himself with astonishment, and overwhelmed me with eager questions, to which I only replied with that invaluable Burleigh nod that throws all the responsibility of perception on the inquirer, and off of the nodder. The physician gazed in silence for some time on the apparently breathless black mass of humanity that lay

heaped upon the floor; and then, with great diffidence and many apologies, requested I would bring him back to life, as he was worth nearly a hundred pounds. I was far from certain whether, or in what manner, this was to be done, and postponed the attempt as long as possible. At length I tried, and succeeded with a vengeance!

It was like a thousand wakenings from a thousand sleeps — long-suppressed consciousness seemed suddenly to flash upon his brain, too powerfully for its patient endurance. With a fearful howl, he started to his feet, flung wide his arms, threw back his head, and, while his eyes rolled wildly in their sockets, he burst into a terrible shrieking sort of laughter. He seized a large vase of water, and dashed it into fragments on the marble floor: he tore up the divan, and smashed the lantern into a thousand bits; then, with his arms spread wide, he rushed about the courtyard, while the terrified Turks hid themselves, or fled in every direction. As I watched their horror-stricken countenances, hurrying to and fro in the various light of the moon and the remaining lantern, their long draperies tangling in the plants and pillars, their black pursuer stalking along as if engaged in some grim game of "blindman's buff;" together with the howl of the maniac ringing far and wide through the silent night,

the shrieks of the women in the hareem above, the rapid tread of the pursued and the tramp of the pursuer among the palms and mimosas in the strange-looking courtyard, the whole seemed to me like some fearful dream, of which I watched the result in painful and constrained suspense.

At length, the slave became exhausted by the violence of his emotions, and flinging himself on the ground, sobbed as if his heart would break. Gradually he came to himself, looked puzzledly round on the scene of devastation he had wrought, and then quietly resumed his meek attitude, and stood with folded arms on his naked chest.

Peace being restored, the scattered audience emerged one by one from their hiding-places, the lantern and fresh pipes were lighted, and we all resumed our seats, except the Armenian priest, who had disappeared in the confusion. The negro was then examined, and he described his sensations as those of exquisite delight; but he was quite unconscious of all that he had done.

As I had preserved an air of quiet indifference (which I was far from feeling) through the transaction, the Orientals thought the matter was all quite right and looked upon me with great respect. My host professed himself as much obliged as astonished by the performance, and begged of me to

return the next evening to repeat the experiment. "Heaven forbid!" thought I, as I took leave of my host, as the following day I did of Damascus.*

* Should any of my readers happen to visit Damascus, and have the good fortune to make Mr. Wood's acquaintance, they will probably hear this magnetic story from him, the physician I allude to having related to him the whole circumstance the following day.

CHAPTER X.

BAALBEC, AND THE CEDARS.

— He saw the Sun go down
On that great Temple, once his own,
Whose lofty columns stand sublime,
  Flinging their shadows from on high,
Like dials which the wizard Time
  Had raised to count his ages by.

MOORE.

The trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may count them.

ISAIAH x. 19.

I was obliged to wait at Damascus until the English monthly mail arrived; so I sent my servants forward early in the morning to wait for me at Zebdani. About three in the afternoon, after a parting cup with the jolly friars, and friendly warnings of danger in going alone at such an hour, I started.

I pressed up the steep and burning side of the mountain, along the edge of an extraordinary ravine, through which the Barada, the ancient Pharphar, rushes from the highlands to the plains; thence, across a dreary, blasted-looking, mountainous country, in which not a blade of grass, of heath, or the vilest weed was to be seen. Naked red or grey rocks appeared everywhere, giving back the burning

rays of the sun with interest, and shining upward into the eyes. But, in the narrow glen, through which the river flowed, all was beauty, richness, and verdure; a long waving line of poplars marked the course of the stream, as far as the eye could reach; these minaret-like trees, and the dome-like masses of the sycamore's heavy foliage, relieved against the evening sky, resembled a strip of some Oriental city. Beneath ran the bright river in a channel of emerald green, with here a foam-flecked mill, and there a vine-sheltered khan upon its banks.

Mills and khans, however, and every other sign of social life soon ceased, and I found myself traversing alone a wide desolate waste, on which the sun went down in purple clouds. Here I lost my way, and it was long before I chanced to learn the right road from a goat-herd. When I reached the pathway again, the last light of day was vanishing. Everywhere I met groups returning to their homes carrying their harvest home, or driving flocks; then the precipitous path became more difficult, the river foamed more wildly, the peasants became fewer, and hurried past me without wishing to exchange salutations with one who was leaving the haunts of men at that late hour.

The few villages that occur in this wild valley, and every trace of cultivation, seemed confined to the river-side. I passed some tombs curiously cut

in the rock, which are said to have been made by the Jews during the Roman persecution. Thence, after passing over a beautiful bridge, I entered upon the Vale of Baalbec. I rode as fast as my wearied horse would travel for some hours; but at last the power of the spur failing, I was fain to walk.

A full moon shone upon the wild, wide, lonely scene, and made curious illusions with the rocks and bushes by the wayside, by which everything imaginable, from crouching demon to crawling Arab, was represented.

My maps were with my luggage, and I had only a slight sketch from Arrowsmith's very inaccurate map to guide me over the waste. In following its guidance, I repeatedly lost my way, until a light on a far mountain-side announced a village. Riding up to this, I found most of its inhabitants sleeping in the open air outside their houses. One of the women waking up, very civilly directed me; and, after another weary hour's ride through fragrant lanes of gum-cistus and wild roses, I reached the pretty little village of Zebdani. This is consecrated by the pleasant association of being the spot wherein Cain murdered Abel, and here I found my tent, in which I was soon soundly asleep.

Zebdani itself is beautifully situated among clustering groves and rapid streams; but, on emerging from its friendly shade, I rode through a perfectly bleak

and barren country, until I came in sight of the huge pile of the temple of Baalbec, with six light columns towering over it; it is situated a little to the right of the centre of the Valley of Bekaa. This vale is about twelve miles wide, and divides Lebanon from Anti-Lebanon: it is extremely rich and naturally fertile, consisting of a thick bed of argillaceous clay on a red sandstone. It is very partially cultivated, however, under the blighting influence of a Turkish government. I counted a herd of one hundred and thirty camels feeding together on one part of the plain; on others, corn was standing, or being threshed in a very primitive manner, by means of small oxen drawing a sledge over it, as it lay strewn in circles round a harvest heap. A little boy stood upon each ledge, and seemed to be practising attitudes as he goaded on his lazy team. I passed two or three wide and dry water-courses, with lofty cliffs of sandstone, and at length reached the quarries whence Baalbec rose. Numbers of stones, hewn, or partly so, are lying here still; one of them measures 68 feet by 14, and must weigh nearly 100 tons.

Tradition (and we have no other guide) says that Baalbec was built by Solomon in order to please one of his Sidonian wives,* who was a sun-

* *Or* for Belbeis, Queen of Sheba, *or* for his Pharaonic bride.

worshipper. In order to raise this amazing pile, he pressed into the service numbers of the Genii, male and female, who were under his command. The former built the walls, the latter carried the stones from this quarry; the vast block I have mentioned was being borne on the shoulder of a female Ginn, when she heard that her brother had been crushed by the falling-in of part of the temple he was building. She flung down her load, which it is unnecessary to add no one has taken up since.

Baalbec forms literally a vast *pile* of buildings. Crushed, broken, and fragmentary as it is, it lies heaped upon its huge platform in magnificent confusion. This platform itself seems as enduring as the cliffs of nature that it imitates: the rocks of which it is composed measured from thirty to sixty feet in length. No one knows by whom, or by what race of men this base was built, but on it have been successively erected the Corinthian temples of the Romans, and the light, fantastic architecture of the Saracens.

High above this varied mass tower six noble columns, upwards of seventy feet, that meet the eye of the farthest wanderer on this great plain. I know nothing equal in effect to their imposing array. Beneath lie strewn around, or ranged along the platform's edge, a vast profusion of broken masses of architecture, and some walls with niches exquisitely

carved. The most striking view perhaps is from the south-east, where part of the magnificent portico still remains; and an avalanche of splendid ruins seems pouring from the old temple on the plain, as if its courts overflowed with those colossal columns, chapiters, and entablatures.

Beneath the platform ran two vast vaulted passages; and above, as you wander among courts like squares, and aisles like streets, it seems rather to be some great city, whose ruins you are traversing, than the boundaries of a temple. The original foundations seem to have been dedicated to the sun under the name of Baal: when the Corinthian temples rose, the same dedication still continued under the name of Helios. Then came the Saracens, who preferred the ancient name of Baalbec to that of Heliopolis, and the Crescent usurped the place of the god of day. Tradition whispers that Baldach, the friend of Job, once inhabited the valley. History is silent on the subject of its city and its temple, until the biographies of Antoninus Pius and Heliogabalus afford notice of its existence.

Baalbec seems to have risen at one time into considerable eminence under the Saracens, and Burckhardt speaks of two mosques and a handsome palace as standing here even in his time. Now, only a miserable village remains, and what is called a palace, belonging to the Emir Handjiar. He was absent at

the period of my visit, enforcing the disarming of the Metoualis by order of the Pasha of Damascus.

Baalbec by moonlight is a sight to remember for ever. As I sat at the door of my tent, with my Arabs lying around me, their horses feeding by the side of each, I thought with regret that this was the last evening I should ever pass among such scenes. Henceforth my course was toward the West.

I had begun to love the climate, and the solitude, and the adventure that I found in the far East — the crowded world admits of no real retirement but that which is fenced round by deserts, and difficulty, and danger. Now, the red Indian does not range more freely in his prairie, than does the traveller in the East: no time, circumstance, or responsibility fetter his free will and action: he is despotic over his attendants, whose wild spirits are as reckless of danger and privation as his own. Swiftly and silently he traverses strange lands; little rest is required for his desert-born cavalcade; little speech necessary for his few wants. He raises his hand, and his canvas home falls from the sumpter-horse upon the ground; the fire, the spread carpet, the light repast, all follow in their course. He waves his hand, they vanish; he points with his fingers to some distant hill, or mountain pass, and his people require no other direction as to their route: now sweeping the plains

at a gallop; now loitering among the mountain glades; now bivouacked in a Moslem village, or mingling unnoticed among the crowds of some city, famous in the Arabian Nights. It is a strangely pleasant life, the interest of which grows hourly stronger as it becomes more familiar.

The following picture, which Sir Walter Scott pronounced to be perfect, is faithful as it is eloquent —

> — In the wilds
> Of fiery climes he made himself a home,
> And his soul drank their sunbeams. He was girt
> With strange and dusky aspects; he was not
> Himself like what he had been. * * *
> — And at the last he lay
> Reposing from the noontide sultriness,
> Couched amid fallen columns, in the shade
> Of ruined walls that had survived the names
> Of those who reared them; at his sleeping side
> Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds
> Were fastened near a fountain, and a man
> Clad in a flowing garb did watch the while,
> And they were canopied by the blue sky,
> So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,
> That God alone was to be seen in heaven.*

But I cannot hope that the patient reader would wish to linger longer among such scenes; and I must take leave of Baalbec. Now we have but the Cedars to visit, and then this pilgrimage draws rapidly to a close.

* From Byron's "Dream."

At the rise of sun I started for the Cedars: hitherto its shadows had fallen behind me; henceforth I followed them. Traversing the wide plain that divides the mountain ranges of the Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon, I turned aside to visit a tall, isolated column, that seems perfectly uncalled-for here, and yields no explanation of its present or its past. There is not even a vestige of any other ruin near it. At the foot of the mountain, I came to a pretty little Maronite village, called Derr el Akmar. Thence upward, the pathway, as usual, took a mountain-stream for guide, the simple engineering of the country taking it for granted that this impetuous pioneer would take the shortest course it could find from its fountain to the plain. And, in truth, she was a pleasant guide to follow, that Undine of the mountains; with her merry voice, and light-hearted friskings, as she scattered diamonds from her shining robes upon the emerald-green cloak that Nature, like Sir Walter Raleigh, had strewn along her path. A rich and varied foliage made a grateful shade, and rustled in pleasant harmony with the bees that hummed among the wild flowers. Then would start up some high, projecting cliff, the summit of which, when won, commanded a wide view of the beautiful valley. So we went on, ever diving into shady valleys, or emerging on some rocky platform where the breeze blew free, and the eye could

wander far over Cœlesyria. Gradually the flowering shrubs ceased, the forest trees gave way to the pine or the prickly oak, and at last we wound along the side of a naked mountain, where our horses could scarce find footing. Then again descending, we came to a ruined village named Ainété, the cause of whose desolation we vainly inquired from a party of mountaineers, who joined us here. From Ainété the path becomes very difficult and dangerous: even our horses trod hurriedly and fearfully along a path that none but a lizard or a mountaineer would have considered safe. Then we passed into a region of snow, and I looked my last upon the valley of Baalbec.*

On the summit of Lebanon might the first of men have stood, and taken his last farewell of the Eden that still bears the name of his lost inheritance: then, turning eastward, his foreboding eye might widely range over the dreary world on which he thenceforth was to wander, far from paradise.

Reversing this order, I took a last, lingering view of that great valley, and those Eastern hills, among whose gorges lay the path to Persia and the

* As the history and statistics of the Tribes of the Mountain are only interesting to the scholar or the traveller, I have transferred such particulars as I could gather concerning them to a note at the end of the volume.

Great Desert: then turned towards Eden, and gazed with insatiable eyes upon the loveliest yet grandest scene that the world possesses.

Gorgeous it was, and dream-like: so unreal and unearthly was the beauty of the land, and the glory of the sea and sky that lay before me. Eden was there, fulfilling every requisition of the imagination, as well as of tradition: and nothing but an Eve was wanting to complete the paradise. Owing to the height whence I looked down, the sea, one sheet of molten gold, appeared to rise half-way up the sky, on which — so glowing was the whole bright West — the horizon was only marked by the sun's half-vanished disc, hovering between the sea and sky that seemed to have caught fire from his beams. The promontory of Tripoli, dark with woods, ran out into the bay; the shore swept on with many a graceful curve and bold promontory, until it faded into distance on the far South. Thence, upward, to the base of the mountain on which I stood, succeeded vine-clad hills and verdant valleys and rich groves and groups of cottages and black precipices, in one richly varied mass: this scene was divided by a deep and dark ravine, through which the Sacred River, the river Kadisha, rushed and foamed. To the right lay a bleak amphitheatre of naked mountains, and in the recess that they surrounded stood a grove of dark trees — these were the Cedars of Lebanon.

I was at first disappointed in the appearance of these forest saints; I had expected to have seen them scattered along the mountain that they consecrated, each standing apart like a vegetable cathedral: but here was a snug, compact little brotherhood gathered together in the most social group; no other tree was visible for many a mile round.

When, however, I reached the forest, after two hours' steep and difficult descent, I found my largest expectations realized, and confessed that it was the most magnificent specimen of forestry I had ever seen. It was delightful to pass out of the glowing, fiery sunshine into the cool, refreshing gloom of those wide flaky branches — that vast cedar shade, whose gnarled old stems stood round like massive pillars supporting their ponderous domes of foliage.

One of the greatest charms of this secluded forest must have been its deep solitude, but that, alas! is gone for ever: some monks obtained the ground for building, and an unsightly chapel was just being raised upon this sacred spot. I confess it seemed to me like a desecration; the place already was "holy ground" to all the world, and these ignorant monks had come to monopolize and claim it for the tawdry and tinselled image which they had just "set up." The churls had even pulled down one of the oldest trees to light their pipes and boil their rice with; I fear, it was with a very bad grace that I

gave a few gold pieces to their begging importunities for the erection of this sectarian chapel, and it was with a very bad grace that they received them.

There are twelve old trees, or Saints, as they are called, being supposed to be coeval with those that furnished timber for Solomon's temple — yes; twelve, I will maintain it, notwithstanding all the different computations on the subject, are there standing now. It is natural that there should be a diversity of opinion, perhaps, as the forest consists of about one thousand trees, among which there is a succession of all ages: nevertheless there is the apostolic number, first-rate in size and venerable appearance. The largest of these is forty-five feet in circumference; the second is forty-four. Many of them are scarred with travellers' names, among which are those of Laborde, Irby, Mangles, Lamartine, &c. I should have thought as soon of carving my name on the skin of the venerable Sheikh of Eden, who soon arrived to pay his respects to the stranger.

That night's encampment was one to be remembered. My tent was pitched on a carpet of soft, green sward, under the wide-spread arms of one of the old saints. At a little distance, the watch-fire blazed up against a pale, grey cliff: its red gleam playing on the branches beneath, and the silvery moon shining on them from above, produced a beau-

tiful effect, as they trembled in the night-breeze, and their dark green leaves seemed shot alternately with crimson and with silver; then the grouping of the servants, and the mountaineers in their vivid dresses, and the sombre priests assembled round the fire, and the horses feeding in the background.

Gradually the chattering ceased; one by one the inhabitants retired to their distant village; the salaams died away; and I was left alone, but for the sleeping servants. All was in fine harmony to sight and sound around me; all nature seemed in profoundest rest, yet palpitating with a quiet pleasure: the stars thrilled with intense lustre in the azure sky, the watch-fire now and then gleamed through the heavy foliage; its fragrance, for it was of cedar-wood, stole gratefully over the tranced senses —

> And not a breath crept through the rosy air,
> And yet the forest leaves seemed stirred with prayer.

The next morning, before sunrise, I broke up my encampment with regret. These are the most interesting trees in the world, except, perhaps, those of Gethsemane; they were the favourite metaphor of the "sweet singers of Israel, and of the Prophets;" and thus it comes that these few trees, standing on this lonely and distant mountain, are known over the wide earth.

Descending from the platform among the mountains where the cedars stand, we pass for some distance through a wild and uninhabited country; then suddenly come upon the beautiful village of Bshirrai, seated on a steep acclivity where mingled lawn, and vineyard, and cliff diversify the view, and separate the cottages.

These last are built open towards the front, which is supported by wooden pillars that give the edifice a temple-like appearance: and never did fane rise in a lovelier spot; with its terraced gardens, and cascades gushing through thick tangles of the clematis, honeysuckle, and wild rose. The fig-tree and the sycamore shade the steep pathways, and by the side of these comely women are at work in their open houses; some are making baskets of earth and straw for their silk-worms, and drying them in the sun; some are embroidering, or making gay little garments for the laughing children that fearlessly approach, and allow you to lift them on your saddle, and play with their long, wavy curls. Round you rise rocks and precipices of fantastic form and various colouring; and beneath, through a dark and grand ravine, foams and thunders the Kadisha. Little paddocks, with real grass (a rare production in these parts), and white cattle grazing thereon, repose in the hollow of the vale; and all around the eye wanders in pleased puzzlement

through the intricate beauties of as fair a scene, from snowy mountain above to deep blue sea below, as ever mortal gazed on.

I passed the convent of Canobin; some limestone hills, extremely rich in fossils; a grand old castle in a picturesque valley; and then emerged upon the shore.

About sunset we reached the river Adonis, on whose banks some merchants had already encamped, and here my muleteer halted, and declared he would proceed no farther that night. The steamer was to sail for Constantinople on the following day, and, as I had some business to transact at Beyrout, I was obliged to push on, leaving my servant to bring on the baggage-horses and the muleteers as soon as it was daylight. The muleteer, seeing me preparing to depart, conjured me to remain, if not for my sake, for his, as he should never see me again, or get paid. He said that the roads were at all times infested by banditti, but at night that the "bad people" came down from the mountains to meet the French and Italian smugglers from the sea, and that few had ever been allowed to pass their haunts alive: I attributed all this to Oriental exaggeration, and rode away. I soon discovered that my guide had spoken faithfully for once.

About ten o'clock I halted for the first time since sunrise, at a small khan, to give my horse a

handful of barley, and to sup upon some cucumbers and sour milk, the only refreshment the place afforded: then, resuming my way, I rode along a very wild and lonely shore, by the light of a brilliant moon. The way soon ascended along the brow of a dark and menacing cliff, which impended over the path so as to render it quite dark. The sea roared hungrily many hundred yards below, the path was rugged and slippery, and it was with difficulty my horse could keep his feet. On descending from these heights, I found myself in a cemetery, whose sculptured turbans showed that the neighbouring village was Moslem. Soon afterwards a widely curved bay spread out before me, and, at its farther extremity, I could see several low, dark craft moored close in shore; while lights, that seemed intended for signals, gleamed at intervals all along the hills. These were extinguished as I approached each, but quickly relighted when I passed. I had wrapped my turban round my neck and waist to protect myself from the cold night; but I now rewound it on my head, as the red tarboosh is the sure sign of a Turkish trooper, and could scarcely escape a rifle bullet in the scenes I was about to enter upon. As I approached a pass in the rocks, four mounted men, videttes I suppose, suddenly dashed out from their concealment, and reined up their horses when close to mine. "Who are you? whither going?"

was quickly asked. "An Englishman travelling to Beyrout," was the reply. They held a moment's counsel, and then suffered me to pass, I know not why.

I rode on uninterruptedly for about a mile, when I came to some tents: camels were lying about, and bales of silk and other merchandize: a few men in Syrian, and also in Frank dresses were passing to and from the boats to the tents. It was about one o'clock, the very noon of night; yet this was their hour of most active business. They had evidently been apprised that a stranger was approaching, and now moved stealthily about among the sleeping camels, and the bales that lay strewn around. There seemed to be some safety in a multitude; retreat was impossible, and I rode straight up to the largest tent. Dismounting, I desired one of the Arabs to lead about my horse to cool, and then asked for a light for my pipe, and lay down upon the tent-carpet.

The scene was a very picturesque one; high mountains frowned over the silvery sands; the smugglers gathered round the door of the tent, their shawl girdles stuck full of pistols and yataghans, and the dew standing on their shaggy brows and moustaches; the tents, the boats, the bright blue sea, and a glorious moon shining over all, formed a picture on which I gazed earnestly as it might be

for the last time. I knew if they robbed, they would also murder me, as the silence of those "who tell no tales" was important to them; and yet I lay smoking my pipe with as much calmness, if not indifference, as ever I did under the shelter of the English flag. Three most sinister-looking ruffians approached me, after a long consultation: they all squinted violently, so that they might have seemed to have but three eyes among them, only, that each time I looked, I saw the eye in a different ball. These were now all glowering in six different ways on the gold tassel of my sword-knot: at length one of them asked me, "what brought me there at that hour of the night?" I said I was an English traveller, and that my servants were following me. The Arab shook his head; but, at that moment, a young Syrian entered the tent, and, to my agreeable surprise, accosted me in French. He said very courteously that I was not aware of the danger I was in, and he would advise me to remain there until morning. I expressed myself obliged for his friendly caution, but persisted in departing, and mounted my horse deliberately; as I gathered up my reins, the three Arabs placed themselves in my way, and one attempted to catch my bridle: I well knew then that my only chance of escape lay in resolution: so, saying to my assailant, "if you move, you die!" the moonlight glimmered on the

barrel of the pistol; the Syrian spoke a few hurried words, whose meaning I could not catch; and the next moment I was past the smugglers, and out of their sight round a projecting rock.

I had still a weary distance to travel; and the broad stream of the Nahr el Kelb to ford or swim, as my jaded horse happened to choose the way, of which I was profoundly ignorant. The sun rose as I entered Beyrout and dismounted from my horse, just twenty-five hours after I had mounted him the preceding day.

CHAPTER XI.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

Is this the sovereign seat of Constantine?
Is that indeed Sophia's far-famed dome,
Where first the Faith was led in triumph home
Like some high bride, with banner and bright sign,
And melody and flowers? Round yonder shrine
The sons, the rivals, yea, the lords of Rome,
Bowed they in reverence, awed by truth divine
Breathed through the golden lips of Chrysostom!
But where that conquering Cross, which, high in heaven,
That dome of old surmounted? angels sweeping
The aërial coasts now hang no more suspended —
With the wild sea-dirge their chants no more are blended —
Onward they speed, by their own sorrows driven;
And the winds waft alone their heavenly weeping.

AUBREY DE VERE.

The next day (July 13th) I found myself on board a Turkish steamer, with 850 troops strewed along the deck so thickly that they could scarcely turn. The fore-cabin was allotted to the hareems of the officers; the ladies' cabin was occupied by a Persian Princess: and two Persian Princes and I had the saloon to ourselves. They were very agreeable, courteous persons, and spoke with delight of their visit to England some years ago. The Opera and the "fire-carriages" were subjects on which they particularly loved to dwell, but the women of England were the supreme subjects of their admi-

ration. "Persian ladees," said Prince Reza Oglu, "very beautifool; Constantininopoli ladees very beautifool; Engleesh ladees much very better."

We passed Cyprus the second day — a mountainous island of great capabilities, but withering under Turkish oppression. Paphos, or *Baffa*, as it is now called, contains only the fragments of one or two broken columns standing upon a promontory, bare, and unmystified by the gloom of surrounding groves. Being in quarantine, we were, fortunately perhaps, not permitted to land in this island — still, it is said, so dangerous to susceptible travellers.

On the third day we made the coast of Caramania; on the fifth we cast anchor in the harbour of the Isle of Rhodes. The CITY OF RHODES presents very much the appearance one would be led to expect from its situation and its history: a mingling of European with Asiatic dwellings: churches and mosques, spires and minarets, intermingled with cypress and sycamore: without the town a pleasant boulevard affords shade for the varied population to saunter under, *à la Parisienne;* or to sit and smoke under, *à la Turque.* Here, also, we were prevented from landing, on account of quarantine; but I pulled about the offiing in one of the ship's boats, and surveyed the inner harbour, across whose narrow entrance the Colossus strode.

It was only twenty-four feet in breadth, so that it requires no great stretch of the imagination to equal that of the image.

This island well deserves a visit, and has been hitherto very imperfectly explored; the interior is said to be very beautiful, and many remains of antiquity lie strewn about there unexamined.

In the evening we weighed anchor, and passed along a fine mountainous coast (Asia Minor) on our right. Patmos, on the left, with many an island of mythologic fame, keeps alive the attention that has henceforth no time to sleep; for every wave of this historic sea is full of memories. Scio and Mitylene now arise; the Gulf of Smyrna opening within this last; and morning's earliest light shows us Ida's mountain over the level plain of Troy, with the tombs of Hector and Achilles appearing like Irish raths.

Soon afterwards we entered the Dardanelles, against a current that continually runs to the southward at the rate of three or four miles an hour. There is little that is picturesque in these celebrated Straits, which vary from one to three miles in width: the shores consist of steep and barren hills, with but few trees scattered along their sides. The same evening we entered the little Sea of Marmora, which was throwing up as heavy a swell as if it was an ocean.

The next morning — the seventh after our departure from Beyrout — revealed to us a distant view of magnificent Stamboul: we were obliged to bear away to the eastward, however, to disembark our troops on the "Princes' Islands," where they were to perform quarantine. Their sufferings during the voyage must have been extreme, exposed during the daytime to a burning sun, and at night to the spray that constantly broke over the ship; yet they showed the same profound apathy in recovering their freedom as they had done during their painful voyage. I never heard a murmur escape from one of them, though some of their officers remonstrated once or twice with the captain about their unavoidable miseries. These officers were, without exception, coarse, mean, dirty, and unsoldierlike: they seemed to belong to the very lowest class of the population.

After a long delay, while the arrival of the Princes was being announced at Constantinople, we were ordered to land at Kartal, a quarantine station on the Asiatic shore. I steered the captain's gig with the royal party in it; while a larger boat took their suite, with a beautiful mare that they had brought from the banks of the Euphrates.

And now I found myself floating on the moonlit sea of Mormora, in the shadows of the minaretted Asiatic shore, with a fair Persian princess in my

charge: I could not see her face; but her voice was soft and gentle as the breeze that breathed through the folds of her long white veil. The princes sate one on each side of me, in high conical caps of black Astrakan fur; and a female slave, enveloped in black drapery, sate opposite her young mistress. We pulled for many a mile along that placid sea, laughing and talking merrily. Prince Timour several times endeavoured to remove his sister's veil, and appealed to me as to whether the most beautiful women in England had any objection to being seen. The khanum,* however, resisted the unveiling, good-humouredly but firmly.

The moon was shining brightly over the Princes' Islands; mingling her pale beams with the golden haze that still lingered where the sun had sunk behind the European hills. We floated tranquilly along under the shadows of the Asian shore, till silence gradually stole upon the sense, or was scarcely broken by the measured stroke of the sailor's oar, and the low, monotonous chant of their Ægean song. The high black caps of the Persians began to glisten with the dew, the veiled figures of the princess and her slave drooped gradually from their unusual attitude, the dolphins played about our prow, and phosphorescent light flashed along the crest of every little wave; the mysterious look-

* Khan, *prince;* khanum, *princess*, in Persian.

ing group and every thing around were in harmony with the romantic scene and hour.

At length we landed on a tongue of land under a deserted palace, and spread a carpet for the Khanum at the foot of a sycamore. I lighted a fire of dried leaves and twigs at which Prince Timour blew until his bearded cheeks seemed about to burst, and the female slave drew forth from some part of her voluminous dress a little silver saucepan, in which we boiled some tea. This was handed in a tiny porcelain cup to the Khanum, and the princes and I made merry over the fire with the rest.

At length the luggage arrived, and we were admitted into the ruined palace which was to be our quarantine prison, with as many precautions as if we had come to storm it.

Travellers! avoid Kartal as you would the plague that it professes to be a guard against. I was shown into a large empty room, with discoloured walls, and a floor thickly covered with dirt and gravel, among which ants and fleas were swarming. The "royal family" had similar accommodations; and we had a narrow courtyard, with high brick walls, in common. We could hear the trees rustle in the gardens outside, but never were allowed to feel their shade; and we could hear the waves laughing along the shore, but never were allowed the luxury of

bathing. Here we were detained for a dismal fortnight, half starved and half scorched; without any resource but our pipes and resignation, both of which my companions possessed in a much greater degree of perfection than I did.

I do not believe that twelve months of captivity could have made freedom more delightful than did the twelve dreary days I had passed in that loathsome prison.

After some hours' sailing, I came in sight of the European shore, and gazed eagerly for some object that might assure me of its identity: when, lo! slowly emerging from the bright horizon, minaret after minaret starts into view; mosque domes and masses of dark foliage follow: with every wave we bound over, some new feature is developed, and at length Constantinople stands revealed in all its unrivalled magnificence and beauty. The Bosphorus shines befores us like a lake: its purple waves dance into the sunlight that turns their crests to gold, and reflect along their margin the mingled foliage and fortresses that shadow their deep waters. Over these rises a richly-mingled mass of palaces, and gardens, and stately towers; and dark groves, with many minarets, and cypress trees, and purple domes, and gleaming crescents. Beyond that gorgeously-crowded hill the peninsula is girded round with the

majestic walls and towers that so long defied the Moslem invaders.

The triangular peninsula which Constantinople occupies is bounded on the south by the Sea of Marmora, on the east by the Thracian Bosphorus, and on the north by the Golden Horn, which separates it from Pera. This unique water is only a quarter of a mile wide, and runs, bordered by arsenals, palaces, and storehouses, for seven miles into Roumelia. All the fleets of Europe might here lie at anchor among the very streets, like the gondolas at Venice. The town of Pera occupies the whole face of the northern shore, looking down upon the Golden Horn, and out upon the Bosphorus: Tophana and Galata are involved in its general name. Here all the Europeans, with their respective embassies and consulates, have their residence.

I coasted along the Asiatic shore, until I passed the Hill of Scutari, covered with a forest of cypresses that conceal the cemetery of the city, and then steered across, under Leander's Tower, for Pera. This fortress is built upon a rock, in the midst of the Bosphorus, whereon used to rest the central links of a chain wherewith the simple people of early times could check the course of ancient navies.

So much has been said and written of Constantinople, I shall only add that it seems to me impossible to exaggerate its beauty and commanding

appearance. There is something so strange in those fairy-like towers and minarets among their rich groves and gardens, contrasted with the imposing situation of the city, and the proud array of castles and fortresses that line the shore; added to the beauty of the bright blue sea in which the city stands reflected, and the clear atmosphere that gives brilliance to the whole; it is impossible to describe the effect produced by such varied and yet harmonious features.

Landed at Pera, I passed a long examination before the civil authorities, and then repaired to Missirie's most comfortable hotel. It was a real pleasure to find myself once more in Europe; and the crowds of people with hats on their heads, and without moustache upon their lips, appeared quite strange to me. I can easily understand the Moslem's contempt for, and dislike to, the shaven face: once accustomed to the majestic beard and the manly moustache, the human countenance certainly assumes a very mean appearance when deprived of these natural adjuncts. The unveiled women, too, seemed very surprising, as they wandered about the streets at their own free will; and for the first day or two I felt more inclined to ask a question of the courteous Oriental, than of the smart, foppish-looking Frank.

The streets of Pera are steep and narrow, but

otherwise strictly European in their appearance. Missirie's hotel would be considered excellent anywhere, but to a man who for nearly a twelvemonth had known no shelter but such as boats, khans, or tents afforded, it was absolutely luxurious. I found several friends here, moreover; and it was some time before I ordered horses, and set off for Buyukderé, the summer residence of our ambassador.

A gaunt black slave, mounted on a camel-like horse, preceded me with my saddle-bags, and we passed at a gallop over the wide, bleak downs that surround Pera towards the north. In some of the valleys were tracts of great richness and fertility, and some comfortable farmhouses and homesteads delightfully reminded me that I was in Europe. After an hour's hard riding we came to Sthené, and thenceforth our path lay along the beautiful shores of the Bosphorus.

This celebrated water somewhat resembles the straits of Menai in its shape and windings, but is on an infinitely larger scale: its steep shores are mostly wooded to the water's edge, and an almost continuous village runs from Pera to Buyukderé. Occasionally this scattered array of cottages and palaces collects into a town, as at Therapia, where the greater number of the ambassadors have summer residences: sometimes it is broken by terraces shaded with trellised vines, or shady recesses among the

cliffs, where the inhabitants sit sipping sherbet and smoking their chibouques. Most of the women wore the picturesque Greek dress, and there was a sufficient sprinkling of Oriental costume among the men to confer a very imposing appearance on these groups. Pleasure seemed to be the only business of their lives; every scene disclosed a garden, every building was a palace, or a fort, or a cottage ornée. On we went at a gallop along the shore, or above the hills, or thundering through the towns, except where some gaily-painted car, full of women, and drawn by two white oxen, blocked up the way. The sun's last light fell upon the Black Sea as I rode into Buyukderé.

Here I passed two or three most pleasant days; and it did not require the contrast of solitude, privation, and hardship, to render appreciated the gifted society and refinements of life which I there enjoyed.

Buyukderé is a very picturesque village, with green verandahs, and red-tiled roofs, and a pretty little quay, with other sea-port appendages in miniature. Men-of-war, with flags of the different nations represented by the ambassadors resident here, are moored a short distance from the shore. These contribute to vary the view reaching through a vista of high cliffs and fortresses to the Black Sea; numbers of caïques are shooting constantly across the

bright blue bay to Therapia; the vine-clad hills and grassy cliffs are mottled with the bright garments of the Greek inhabitants, and the whole scene is full of interest and animation.

One morning, I took a caïque to visit the Symplegades and the Black Sea: these graceful boats are the principal means of transit along the Bosphorus, as gondolas are at Venice; their bows are very sharp, and rise so far that only one-half of the caïque seems to rest upon the water. Their sides are formed of a single plank of very thin beech, and are quaintly adorned with gilding and oak-carving; you recline on silken cushions that supersede all seats, and, thus reposing, are shot along with incredible rapidity.

Rowed by two athletic Turks, I passed by a succession of bold cliffs and verdant valleys opening from the strait, with numerous forts close to the water's edge, and in less than an hour I was bounding over the waters of the Euxine. The light caïque leapt from wave to wave of this troubled water like a sea-gull, and it was with some difficulty we disembarked on the mass of dark and rugged cliffs that represent the Symplegades, or Cyanean rocks. This singular pile starts up from the sea to a considerable height, surmounted by an altar of pure white Parian marble. Who raised the lonely altar on this wild island none can tell; but imagination will have it to

be a votive monument of some rescued mariner in the times when Argo sailed these seas.

The view from thence is very striking, commanding a wide range of the European and Asiatic shores, and of that gloomy and turbulent sea so celebrated in the songs of the sunny Archipelago. The light-houses of Europe and of Asia serve to guard as well as to enlighten the entrance to the Bosphorus, and their strong fortresses add to the effect of the bold and naked cliffs on which they stand.

We went one evening from the ambassador's palace to visit Unkiar Skelessi, an old fortress crowning one of the Asiatic hills. The sunset was magnificent, and the Bosphorus beneath us seemed one sheet of burning gold; while far away, over hill, and vale, and ruined tower, and broken aqueduct, the crimson light lent a new charm and marvel to the splendid landscape. Yet when the sun was gone, he could scarcely be regretted; evening came on with so beautiful and bright an aspect, with such diamond stars, and azure sky, and fragrant flower-smells, and softened sounds. As we glided away from that grand old castle of the Genoese, it seemed restored by the doubtful light to all its strength; the hanging woods and beetling cliffs were reflected in the star-spangled stream; the air seemed exquisitely sensitive to the faint fragrance and the

distant song; and it was like the breaking of a spell when the caïque struck lightly against the marble terrace of the Palazzo.

On the 2nd of August, I left Buyukderé, and my caïque shot rapidly along the bright blue stream towards Constantinople; on the eastern shore, the "Sweet Waters of Asia" with the Sultan's palace, claimed a visit: and the beautiful village of Candalie may not be neglected, if it were only in memory of Jupiter's adventure with Europa, and the deep allegory it contains.

Constantinople is a delightful summer residence, but the climate in winter is very disagreeable, and has none of those counteracting comforts that make us warmly welcome winter to our English hearths. The view from the burying-ground at Pera is one of the finest in the world; here all the gay people of the Frank city assemble in the evening, and wander among the tombs with merry chat and laughter; or sit beneath the cypress-trees, eating ice and smoking their chibouques. We looked down over the roofs of Tophana and Galata upon the Golden Horn, whose appellation the sunset seems to realize:* its waters are specked by many a caïque,

* This epithet was applied to it in the Greek times, and perhaps had some analogy with the crescent. In the East generally, the epithet "golden" is applied as a term of excellence; thus there is the Golden Gate at Jerusalem, &c.

and reflect the white sails of a hundred ships; beyond it suddenly rises Stamboul* itself, its richly-mingled masses of dark foliage and white palaces enveloping the peninsula, whose point terminates in the Sultan's seraglio with its gardens. The undulations of the Seven Hills may be traced through the city that encrusts them, and occasionally you catch glimpses of the Seven Towers, the Palace of Belisarius, and the brave old walls. Over all rises Mount Olympus, connecting earth's scenery with that of cloud-land.

All these, of course, we visited in detail, but they are too familiar to every reader to claim description. The Mosque of St. Sophia, with all its spoils,** and the remains of such magnificence as led Justinian to exclaim, "Thank God I have been enabled to outdo Solomon!" scarce repays the trouble of procuring a special firman, and the troop of guards that must accompany you. A mosque seems to me the most uninviting and prayerless-looking place of worship in the world: it is naked, altarless, tawdry, and dreary-looking. The Sultan's palace contains a bewildering number of apartments of quaint shapes

* The Turkish name of Constantinople. When the city was taken by the Turks, its ancient name was forbidden to be used, and the country people used to speak of going "εἰς την πολιν," whence *Stamboul*, they say. They *also* say it is called from Islam-bol, "abounding in faith."

** Among these are eight porphyry columns from Baalbec, and eight more from Diana's Temple at Ephesus.

and simple ornament: some are carpeted, some mirrored; there is no furniture, except cushions, and a very few tables, in any of them; but the views from the windows are superb. Those of the Harem* look out upon the Bosphorus,

> — "whose waters roll
> O'er many a once love-beaten breast."

The other sights of Constantinople are so similar or inferior to those of more thoroughly Oriental cities, that I shall not run the risk of repeating myself by describing them. The walls of the city, protecting the peninsula on the land-side only, are by far the most interesting remains of ancient Constantinople. They extend from the Sea of Marmora to the Golden Horn, a distance of about five miles, and connect a chain of towers through their whole extent. They are divided by a deep fosse from another battlemented range of walls, which is surrounded by a moat and a sort of glacis. Mantling as they are with ivy, their war-worn fronts deeply scarred from the crusading and the Turkish battering-engines, they still present a most imposing appearance. Ruin has only made them reverend, and left them all their lofty look. The road along their base was profoundly silent; on the left lay an ex-

* This word is pronounced *har'm* in Turkish — *hareem* in Arabic.

tensive cemetery, where the cypress shadowed the Moslem's tomb with its sculptured turban, and the terebinth kept watch by the Armenian's grave. They say that this homeless people brought this tree with them from the shores of Lake Van, and now love to see those who are dear to them sheltered in their last sleep by its ancestral shade.

The cicerone affects to show the spot where Paleologus fell as became the last of the Cæsars: it is unnecessary; for every stone of that well-defended rampart is a monument to his heroic name. His was no mere animal courage — the wild brain-fever of the moment: he saw the hour of destruction approaching from a distance; he withstood the work of dastardly treachery within, as bravely as the war of the Infidel without, the city; he had not even one glimmering of earthly hope to light him onward; but Honour was her own beacon, and showed him where and how to die. Even in his death he was identified with the people he loved so well, and days elapsed before his body was discovered, so mangled that the eagle embroidered on his dress alone told to whom it had belonged.

We entered the city by a gate through which the Romans were wont to pass, and rode up to the palace of Belisarius, in whose courtyard swarms of women and naked children were harboured; the former tried to conceal their sun-scorched faces with

some dirty rag, while they held up the other hand for charity, or strove to seize our bridles. Passing from this screaming mob, whose faces were the only decently covered part of their persons, we ascended by some ruinous stone steps to the palace halls: here Desolation dwells alone:

"The spider hath woven his web in the palace,
And the owl hath sung her death-song on the towers of Afrasiab." *

The view from these mouldering walls is the finest in Constantinople. There are nine gates or *portes* to the city, the most remarkable of which is the "Bab el Hamajoom," looking out towards Pera: here sits the supreme council of the empire, and the appellation of government is identified with the Porte which it occupies. In all Oriental countries, the gate was selected as the place for administering justice, as being the most public and the easiest of access. The Turks retained many of their ancient usuages among the Greek customs which, for the most part, they adopted, and this is one of the most remarkable.**

We had a busy time of it at Constantinople. I found a pleasant party at Missirie's hotel, and every

* Hafiz.

** Mr. Thornton, however, ingeniously argues that the palace of the Grand Vizier is called the Porte metaphorically, as being the *door* of communication between the Sultan and his people.

hour of the day, and almost of the night, brought with it its engagement. Caïques and horses were in constant requisition, whether to skim the bright Bosphorus, or to scour the environs of Stamboul. On Friday, we hurried down to the shore, to see the Sultan going to mosque, as a royal salute from the Seraglio announced that his caïque had left the palace; ours shot along swiftly, but the Sultan's seemed to fly; twenty-six rowers, in silken jackets, urged each gilded galley over, rather than through, the water. First came a caïque, with a canopy of blue: under this a group of officers, in blue frock coats with diamond stars upon the breasts, sate all facing the Sultan, whose caïque followed at a short distance. He sate under a green canopy, beneath which was spread a wide cloak of dark green cloth, lined with *calico:* four officers accompanied him, with their yellow faces turned towards his, like so many sunflowers: a third galley followed, and this comprised the procession. A regiment of troops, in Turco-European costume, awaited his arrival, and a very respectable band struck up a wild air, which, I suppose, meant, "Allah, save the Sultan!"

He remained about half an hour in the mosque, then mounted a handsome horse, and passed with his suite through a dense crowd, of which we formed part. He is twenty-three years of age, and rather handsome, with a keen, dark eye, and brown mous-

tache. He wore a plain blue frock coat, with a red cap and purple tassel; he stared at us as he passed, but took no other notice of our salute. There seemed a considerable display of taking care of him; but evidently, the large attendance of guards, and the mystery maintained as to his movements, were measures of etiquette rather than of safety. Grand viziers seem to undertake all the unpopularity of the sovereign, together with their other responsibilities: they are often exposed to popular fury — the Sultan never. His divine character, as the vice-regent of the Prophet, adds considerably to his temporal authority; and, when the late Sultan Mahmoud found himself in a crisis in which no political expedient could avail him, he had only to unfurl the Sacred Standard (consisting of the unmentionables of Mahomet); the people flocked round him with devotion, and the janizaries were extirpated.

Sultan Mahmoud was one of the five great men who have been the instruments of signalizing our age. He ventured on the glorious attempt which few have survived, and none have ever lived to see accomplished — that of regenerating a corrupt people. The attempt failed utterly, as regarded the creation of new powers and capacities: the old were destroyed; but there was no reproductive principle in the Turkish character. At the bidding of his Sultan, the Turk laid aside the external distinctions

of his race, and with them he abandoned the sustaining pride, the consciousness of superiority, the elevating fanaticism that fused his patriotism and his creed into one great passion. His contempt for the Frank, whose politics, dress, and mode of warfare he had been compelled to assume, has reacted into respect and fear; such fear, at least, as a Turk can know, for they are a gallant people still, those Osmanlis;* and though they feel that their empire is drawing to a close, and are prepared for the fulfilment of one of those strange old prophecies, like that which prepared the Yncas for the subjugation of *their* country, they will doubtless die fearlessly in defence of those walls so fearlessly won by their fierce ancestors.

* This is the name by which they choose to be called. Turk is an epithet of contempt, though they call their country and their language *Toorkey*,

CHAPTER XII.

GREECE.

What must have been thy nature, oh Greece! when, marvellous-
lovely?
As it is now, it is only the tomb of an ancient existence.
R. M. MILNES.

On the morning after sailing from Constantinople we found ourselves off the plains of Troy, whence we ran along the coast of Tenedos, and touched at the pretty little town of Mitylene. Thence we coasted by Scio, and entering the Gulf of Smyrna, cast anchor off the town, forty hours after leaving the Golden Horn.

The beauty of "Infidel Ismir," as Smyrna is called by the Turks, has been much vaunted, yet scarcely realizes the idea of the old Ionian loveliness. The scenery around the gulf is wild, and wide, and mountainous; softening a little as it approaches the city, and becomes interspersed with the gardens and villas of the wealthy merchants. Smyrna itself is a common-place, Turkish town, with dirty, narrow streets, and melancholy-looking bazaars. I had little opportunity of judging of the women's celebrated beauty, as we only remained here during the

noontide hours; all the fairest part of creation were then hiding themselves from the scorching sun.

On a hill commanding the city are some fine ruins, and the remains of an early Christian church. We are sometimes accustomed to think of the Seven Churches of Asia Minor as of so many distinct edifices, visible, and architectural; many a traveller who would smile at being asked to describe the shape of the Church of England, or of Scotland, has gone eagerly in search of each seventh part of Asiatic Christendom. Tradition consecrates Smyrna as the place where Polycarp suffered martyrdom; man and nature have well avenged him ever since upon the Smyrniotes. Earthquakes, plagues, and Turks have done their worst to this devoted city, but the elastic energies of commerce have still sustained it in its troubles, and triumphed over pestilence and persecution. The English almost monopolize the fruit trade, the French devote themselves to cotton, and the Dutch, who formerly held the principal commerce in their own hands, have now scarcely a representative.

The heat of the climate here is moderated daily by a fresh sea-breeze, that blows without intermission from noon to sunset, at which time we sailed. The next day found us in the Grecian Archipelago, with Delos, Tinos, and Syra lying round us. We cast anchor in the harbour of the latter towards

evening, and landed on a rocky promontory opposite the town.

Here we were to perform European quarantine, and our prison looked dismal enough as the stormy evening set in, and the wind howled round the naked walls and desolate rocks of our dwelling. But the next morning brought sunshine and cheerfulness; our rooms were furnished, our books, &c., were unpacked, guardianos were assigned us, and the British Consul kindly sent us a file of newspapers.

The climate, however, is delightful, though it never ceased to blow during our stay at Syra. The wind wailed wildly and mournfully round our prison as in an English November, contrasting curiously with the clear bright sky, and the rich cheerful colouring that invests even this bleak rocky island with a beauty not its own. We look out to the eastward upon the island of Tinos, which assumes every hue of the rainbow in the course of each cameleon day: a deep purple sea, flecked constantly with foam, breaks against our cliffs; and opposite us, divided by a little bay, crowded with shipping, lies the town of Syra; its mass of white houses running in a conical shape to the summit of the convent-crowned hill.

At length our quarantine was finished; I almost regretted our release, for the perfect repose that it necessitated was very grateful after incessant and

laborious travel. I had come to love the rocks, and the bright sea, and the changing views around me; nothing felt irksome but the sense of confinement. *

On the day of our release, we rose with light to welcome liberty, and, breakfasting at Syra, were soon riding up to the summit of the lofty hill of which the island is composed. From here we had a magnificent view of the Cyclades, girding round the birthplace of Apollo and Latona, and picturesquely scattered about among those bright blue waters.

The next day we sailed to Delos, a distance of about fifteen miles: favouring breezes soon brought us to the island of Rhenia, and thence up a narrow channel to the marble pier of the Sacred Island, whither the religious processions of ancient Greece came to worship at the shrines of Apollo and Diana. This island, like all the other Cyclades, is destitute of trees, and almost equally so of verdure: some shrubs grow among the interstices of the rocks and in a degree relieve the eye, but it is to the brilliant colouring of their delicious climate that they owe all their beauty. It is impossible to describe the delicate and fugitive tints that invest every hill and valley in rapid succession; the sea itself is ever vary-

* Syra has since then ceased to be a quarantine station, which is now transferred to Athens, as a more convenient locality.

ing, and reflects their picturesque forms in green, or blue, or azure, as the sky's mood changes.

Delos is about three miles in circumference. Mount Cynthus, in whose recesses painters and poets have placed Diana, fatigued with the chace or bathing her immaculate form, is about half the size of Primrose Hill. There is no spring on the island and the sacred lake is dry; the soil is everywhere strewed with ruins, but it is difficult to identify the site of the temples: the amphitheatre is a noble monument of Hellenic architecture, and as perfect as a ruin ought to be. The island has been very little visited, and there appears to be a wide field for research amongst its varied relics. Our party was a large one, and consisted, moreover, entirely of English: a circumstance which, I know not why, is always fatal to research, or even to reflection: a scoffing spirit inevitably prevails; and whether on the mountain of Parnassus, or in the valley of Jehoshaphat, our countrymen seem to think that every thing is unreal except themselves and their sandwiches: this is the very triumph of objectivity.

The following day we sailed from Syria, over waves that might have seemed a shoal of dying dolphins, such various and beautiful colours played over every undulation in the exquisite light of a Grecian sunset. Then Dian's own bright orb rose over her native island, followed by Hesperus,

— "that planet blest,
The lover's lamp, the wanderer's pledge of rest."

Brilliantly beautiful as are the days in this delicious climate, the nights have a loveliness that can scarcely be surpassed in that world of delights that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard." The serene heavens above; the soft music of the rippling waves, with the lustrous foam upon their crest and the purple shadows of their depths; the balmy airs, the storied islands among which you wander — all this restores a poetry to the most blasé existence — a poetry that has lingered unconsciously about the heart since youth, and which, when once awakened, is not easily scoffed down.

In such "a time, and clime, and spot," long years, with all their burthen, pass away from the tranced spirit: with a boy's glad heart, and childhood's enthusiasm, we gaze on the glorious scenery that surrounds us, as Argolis, Ægina, Salamis, and the Immortal Mountain, start into view. Now the Acropolis of Athens greets us like some well-remembered vision; and, rounding the promontory that supports the tomb of Themistocles, we glide into the harbour of the Piræus.

Down goes the anchor, and with it all sentiment, to the bottom of the sea. This renowned harbour is exceedingly matter-of-fact in its present appearance. Well-slated store-houses and custom-offices line the

quays: commissionnaires from various hotels persecute you with most European pertinacity: and — by the shade of Anacreon! — there is a gin-shop that would not surprise you at Portsmouth; and there! — there is an omnibus waiting to whirl you along the macadamized road to Athens at sixpence a head! The smart phaeton in which we deposited our persons was not more classical except in *name;* but the coachman wore the Greek costume, and greaves embroidered after the Achillean fashion.

The six miles of road that leads to Athens is one of the most interesting that one travels in the course of a life, notwithstanding the omnibuses, and the gin-shops, and the turnpike-gates. As we drive along, we seem to recognize each feature of nature and of art, so long familiar to the imagination, until we rattle through a town which might escape observation at Islington; and finally emerge into a large open space, terminated by the shapeless palace of King Otho. This square is enclosed on either side by large modern houses; one of these, the Hôtel d'Orient, was our destination.

Since Athens has been gathered into the European family and restored to Christendom, it has become as familiar to the public as Edinburgh. It would, however, be too late at this period of my pilgrimage to affect fastidiousness in treading upon beaten ground; and this is the spot above all others

on which I should like to linger, and, if it must be so, to take my leave of the gentle reader.

Greece is one of the few countries that I have an ardent desire to revisit, and yet, at every step one takes, there is an annoying — almost a painful — sense of incongruity between its present and its past; and, what is worse, a hopeless attempt to reconcile them. In Rome, the gradation from the older to the later time is almost imperceptible; the gods, temples, and ceremonies were converted to Christianity, together with the souls of men. The bronze statue of Jupiter became St. Peter, and Juno has transmitted her peacock feathers to the state insignia of the Pope; the Tomb of Adrian has resolved itself into the Castle of St. Angelo; and, more than all else, the vitality of Roman Art connects the present with the past. Scarcely had the awakened taste of Europe begun to appreciate the beauty of the Pantheon, when Michael Angelo exclaimed, "I will place it in the air!" and kept his word by crowning St. Peter's church with such another for a dome. Petrarch was crowned with laurel on the capitol without any apparent sense of ridicule; Rienzi ably acted the character of the Last of the Tribunes; Painting caught the mantle which Sculpture had let fall; and Raphael's pencil realized conceptions as glorious as the chisel of Phidias had ever wrought.

With Greece it was otherwise — in her fate seemed verified the pagan aphorism, "Whom the gods love die young." She passed away in the season of her triumphant youth; she perished in her pride; and, through the night of ages that followed, her imperishable name alone was remembered. Even in Cæsar's triumph, he "spared the contemptible living only for the sake of their glorious dead."

And now, a Bavarian king and an alien people are to restore the glory of ancient Greece! Verily, they seem like children playing at statesmen and soldiers, and no place will serve for their game but Athena's own sacred precincts. Behold the first fruits of resuscitated Grecian art — the palace of King Otho! Full in the sight of the Acropolis, in the same plain with the Temple of Theseus, and in the solemn presence of that Olympian Jove, there stands a huge, white, cubic edifice that would disgrace Trafalgar-square; of the Piræus I have already spoken; on the Hill of the Musæum, within a stone's throw of the Acropolis, there has just been erected an observatory, that stands in as hideous contrast to the Parthenon as Caliban to Ariel. Such are the first and most prominent objects that strike a stranger's eye, and they are characteristic of all modern Greece. No one can blame this people for wishing to become a nation; but their ambition to

become *ancient* Greeks, and to make the Athens of Otho identical with that of Pericles, is fraught with embarrassment and hopeless difficulty.

Athens is rather a neat, little, modern town; with shops, and market-places, and porters, and hand-barrows, and horseboys, and all that sort of thing. There are, fortunately, but few vestiges of antiquity enclosed within these modern walls; and the two most remarbable, the Porch of Adrian and the Temple of the Winds, do not suffer much from their position. The residences of the ministers of foreign courts form a quarter by themselves, and suburban buildings of true cockney fashion are rapidly extending in all directions.

My first impressions of Athens, it is unnecessary to say, were anything but satisfactory; but when I walked a few hundred paces out of the noisy city, and found myself in a solitude as deep as that of the desert, I was appeased: the "religion of the place" came over me once more as I stood under those magnificent columns of the Temple of Jupiter Olympus, "that plead so haughtily for times gone by." Few of these mighty pillars remain, and these are but partially connected by architrave and entablature, yet they form the most imposing ruin I have ever seen. The vast and massive monuments of Egypt are wanting in the majesty and grace which unite that beauty to sublimity, without which

the latter repels, rather than invites or creates, the sympathy of the spectator. Around this ruin there was the profoundest silence, and it stood utterly alone; there was not a fallen column or a splinter there: the only living creature was a Turk, whose barbaric garb harmonized to my mind with the scene in which I found him. It was *his* ruthless race that had made Athens desolate; it was owing to *his* brethren that the temple now stood in its imposing solitude, for their artillery had swept away all the modern buildings that once surrounded and encumbered it. Moreover, he stood there, the representative of those great Eastern hordes whom Athens had now, for the third time, expelled from her sacred precincts. In the days when Xerxes or Mahmoud planted their standards upon Grecian ground, the figure of a Persian or Osmanli might seem intrusive — but now my turbaned companion stood upon that free soil, like one of the Caryatides of old — a monument of his own defeat.

Athens, the smallest metropolis in Europe, has for its suburbs edifices that have been marvels and models to the whole world. From St. Petersburgh to Washington, there is not an attempt at ornamental architecture that does not claim descent from some one or other of these immortal structures. I shall not attempt to describe them, but merely

recapitulate a few of the scenes of interest lying within an hour's ride of Athens.

From the Temple of Jupiter we passed under the Arch of Adrian to the Lantern of Demosthenes, which is encumbered by hovels; the Odeum of Pericles, the Theatre of Bacchus, the Odeum of Regilla; thence by a winding path to the Acropolis.

This was the great altar of the country, whereon were deposited the most precious offerings of art that human genius ever realized. Its presiding deity was the Goddess of the Mind, in whose Phidian statue her own inspiration was divinely evidenced. This was the Minerva Parthenos, which overlooked all Greece and the outer world: while Practical Wisdom (or Common Sense?) had its representative in Minerva Polias, whose statue, "looked at home," and kept watch over the city.

On entering by the propylæa, the first object of interest is the beautiful little temple of Victory, which was built to commemorate the expulsion of the Eastern hordes under Mardonius; strange to say, on the expulsion of their Eastern invaders under Mahmoud, this temple came again appropriately to light; it was rescued from the débris caused by various sieges, and is now restored in all its pristine beauty to its original site. It is an allegory in itself.

The first object that strikes one after passing this little fane is the tall Frank Tower, whose removal has been so much debated. Notwithstanding its heterogeneous appearance, it would be much missed; its effect at a little distance is excellent, and its removal would leave a blank which there is nothing to fill up.

The Parthenon occupies the southern side of the Acropolis, but seems, as it were, to pervade it all with his own surpassing beauty, and to monopolize that natural altar; so that all its other temples seem subservient to that one. It is admirably chaste, as becomes its virginal dedication; but the friezes that surmount the simplicity of those columns contain the most exquisite sculpture in the world. This temple has been repaired as far as its own ruins afforded materials, but no substitute can supply their place where wanting. What a proud tribute to ancient art is this impossibility to restore what Time or Lord Elgin has removed! it reminds one of the genii-built palace of Aladdin, wherein one window was left unfinished, and this all the wealth and art of the East were unable to make equal to the rest.

The work of renovation still goes on, but scantily, through want of funds; meanwhile, the scaffoldings, and prepared materials, and assorted frag-

ments, give the Acropolis the appearance of something between a museum and a mason's yard.

The view from hence is magnificent: it is not merely that the features of the scenery around are as beautiful as they are eloquent with a thousand memories; but the climate invests all nature with such varied and exquisite colouring, as in these northern latitudes one sees only in the sunset landscapes of "cloudland." The scanty stream of the Cephisus, the heathy mountain of Hymettus, the barren summit of Pentelicus, the olive-groves, the grassy plains, the distant sea, all are invested with a marvellous light — gorgeous as a painted window, yet delicate as the complexion of a changing cheek.

We will not linger on the Hill of the Museum, or even on that of the Nymphs; but let us pause a moment on the Pnyx, whence all oratory derives its models, as all architecture does from the Acropolis. The Bema, from which Demosthenes thundered against Macedon, might be taken for an altar, but for its tradition; it is hewn out of the solid rock, and surrounded by steps, on which sat the Prytanes — the Athenian house of lords. Beneath is a platform capable of containing 5,000 men — the commons of the old Republic. The Bema, whence the orators harangued the people, commanded in very ancient times a wide view of earth and sea; but

the Thirty Tyrants, fearing the powerful appeals to freedom and to Salamis that its position suggested and gave effect to, had it cut down to its present elevation, commanding only Athens and the surrounding plain; it was from this last, however, that Demosthenes hurled those "winged words," more terrible to Philip than the swords that they evoked.

What a strangely glorious, contemptible people were those old Athenians! — now, like gods, arming themselves for Marathon, or abandoning their worshipped Athens for the "wooden walls" that fought round Salamis; now like children intoxicated with success or prostrated by defeat; swayed by the meanest passions of jealousy and avarice; banishing an Aristides, robbing friendly colonies, and leaving a Miltiades to die in chains.

Yet, let us not forget all we owe to this wonderful people; "how much more has the little peaceful Athens done for the world than that raging giant, Rome!" * The earliest and brightest associations of the young heart are connected with the name of Greece: in her sublime story, the boy first finds his task become an inspiration: under its spell heroic instincts become developed, patriotism becomes devotion, and the love of Freedom a quenchless passion.

* Jean Paul Richter.

If Greece accomplished the most heroic deeds, her eloquent language first rendered them immortal; justly, the statue of the Goddess of the Mind stood supreme among the monuments of Freedom's and of Greece's triumphs; for the orator first inspired, and the historian recorded them — in itself another inspiration. Grecian poets they were who first perceived and translated to the world its own exquisite beauty; and to *her* sculptors it was first revealed that there slept, enveloped in the Parian marble, those ideal forms of grace, and strength, and loveliness, which it required but their chisel to discover and awaken.

A rugged rocky eminence rises between the Pnyx and the Acropolis; this is the Areopagus, whereon Paul preached with power on the very throne of eloquence, and denounced idolatry in the midst of idols. With a mythology that made deities as numerous as the attributes of the Creator, how mournful and full of meaning was that Athenian altar "to the unknown God!"

We descend to a lower platform, whereon stands the Temple of Theseus, which Time seems to have swept over with his wing, and not his scythe. Indeed, at a little distance it is scarcely distinguishable from its imitation in Edinburgh, except by the delicate "neutral tint" that has stolen over its once snowy marble.

The Cephisus, which formerly arrested the march of the Persian army, now trickles languidly along its shrunken course; the Ilyssus exists no longer, but a torrent-like line of oleanders seem still to fill its course with verdant waves and rosy foam. The olive and the fig-tree have almost disappeared, and the hills are naked, except where the Hymettus heath still blossoms for its bees. These hills were once thickly covered with wild wood, and would soon be so again, but that the peasants burn them down, in order to apply their ashes to their exhausted soil.

Modern Greece appeared to me to be full of promise, notwithstanding her factious people, and her puerile king. Otho was doubtless a most unfortunate choice, as monarch of an infant state; and it is said that King Leopold now deeply repents not having accepted the offer of the throne of Greece. With his talents, his experience, and his moderation, he might have already found himself the king of a great people, and not impossibly have bequeathed to his successors the empire of the Palæologi.

The present sovereign of Greece does not seem possessed of one kingly quality. Educated with a view to a cardinal's hat, his Jesuit tutors are not perhaps responsible for his royal acquirements, but Europe has already had fearful instances of the result of such an education. Until the late revolution,

Otho was the most despotic monarch in Christendom; of the parliament, so long promised and so solemnly guaranteed, there was no trace; the council was composed of his creatures, whose tenure of office depended on his will; Bavarians monopolized every place of trust, honour, or emolument; all claims of service established in the War of Independence were set at nought; and those who ranked as princes in the tented field found themselves undistinguished and unnoticed at the court of the monarch whom they had placed upon the throne.

The two grand national mortgages afford no interest to the bondholders; Rothschild secures only *his* repayment by the guarantee of the three great powers. The civil list amounts to about £ 36,000 per annum, and the king retains his Bavarian appanage of £ 7000 a-year.

The population of Greece does not amount to above 900,000 souls; and this, notwithstanding the fecundity of the people, is daily diminishing, owing to emigration. When the independence of Greece was first declared, numbers of Fanariot (or Constantinopolitan) Greeks repaired to their own country, but, finding the despotism and oppression there more galling than in the Turkish provinces, they returned hastily to the Sultan's rule.

There are about 12,000,000 of acres contained within the boundaries, as defined by the three great

Powers; of these more than half are comprised in the Morea. It is computed that 5,000,000 of people could find ample subsistence in this highly-favoured country, if its resources were fairly developed. There is not a landed proprietor in Greece worth £ 500 a-year: the revenues of the church were all confiscated in the revolution, and the clergy are at present poorly paid by the government, or rather by the king. Some Englishmen have settled in the Negropont and other parts of Greece, but, owing to the taxes and other drawbacks, they do not receive above one-and-a-half per cent. on their purchase-money.

The people are sober, intelligent, and easily governed: their passion is for constitutional rights and education. It is very interesting to observe their zeal for their native literature, and their anxiety to restore their language to its ancient purity. The schools are eagerly filled by hundreds of little Demostheneses, Miltiadeses, Aspasias, and other immortal names.

Mr. and Mrs. Hill, American episcopal missionaries, have done more for Greece than all the Philhellenes put together; the Scriptures, and the leading doctrines of the Christian faith, are taught without reference to any particular creed; and this mode of education is unopposed by any party.

A handsome university has been erected at Athens, and endowed by public subscription; but the king, as usual, laid hands upon it, and appropriated all the patronage to himself. It is interesting to observe the endeavours that Greece has always made, through all her disadvantages, to cultivate that literature to which her poverty-stricken people still fondly cling, as by an instinct. Joannina was famous for its schools one hundred years ago under Methodius, and recently, under Athanasius, Psalida, and Valano. Daniel of Patmos had a school of repute in that island; and Scio and Athens have preserved their colleges through all the disastrous vicissitudes of Turkish rule and civil war.

It seems to me that Greece has never received sufficient credit for her gallant and successful struggle against her Turkish oppressors: it was the most heroic strife of modern times, and it is to be compared only to that now carried on by the brave Circassians, to whom may Heaven vouchsafe a like successful issue! Under the Turkish domination, the Greeks consisted of the warrior people of the hills, and the trampled serfs of the Plain. The former never have been conquered, though assailed in turn by the Byzantine, Catalan, Venetian, and Osmanli. If the blood of ancient Greece does not flow in their veins, her spirit is alive in their hearts; and many a battle-scene of the late fight for freedom

displayed the classic character, as well as the heroism of the men of Thermopylæ and Marathon.

It is to be remembered that Greece, with a male population amounting scarcely to the number of the Sultan's army — disunited, ignorant of the art of war, without money, resources, or assistance — defeated the forces of the Ottoman and Egyptian army, and wrested freedom from their powerful oppressor. *This* is all that History will remember; she will cast away the petty details of treason, jealousy, and peculation, that probably darkened the day of Marathon as well as that of Missolonghi; and only tell that Greece — after the lapse of three-and-twenty centuries — vindicated the glorious fame and freedom of the past.

Until September 23rd, 1843, Greece exhibited a tyranny as despotic as any in the East: patiently and perseveringly she had striven to obtain from her Bavarian king the freedom so hardly wrung from a Moslem oppressor. Otho turned a deaf ear to such meek remonstrance. The Great Powers declined to interfere between the Grecian people and the Prince, who had been their liberal and only contribution to the welfare of this restored member of the European family.

The revolution took place a few days after I left Athens. Whilst I remained there, the king and queen drove or rode out, without any guards, every

evening at sunset. The former, though far from handsome, looked well in the beautiful Greek dress, and carefully returned the salute of every citizen. The latter has a fine figure and commanding presence. It is said that, when a child, she used to pore with delight over the romantic history of Greece, and long to visit a country which had deeply impressed her imagination. Time sped on, and brought Otho and his crown to her feet.*

The chief object of attraction, however, in the royal cavalcade, was Mademoiselle Botzaris,** daughter of the hero of Missolonghi. She is maid of honour to the queen, and one of the most beautiful women in Europe. The simplicity of her dress, which consisted of an English riding-habit, and the crimson cap of her country, served to set off her classic beauty to advantage.

The Greeks are the handsomest race of men I have ever seen, while their women are very much the reverse. The dress of the former, together with their graceful, manly bearing, contributes much to the imposing effect of their appearance. They wear a crimson cap, with a long blue tassel, a purple or dark green jacket over a richly embroidered waist-

* The King is a Roman Catholic, the Queen a Lutheran, and the children (should they have any) are to be educated in the ritual of the Greek Church.

** Since married to Prince Soutzo.

coat, a very voluminous white kilt descending below the knee, and tightly girded round the waist with a Syrian scarf; embroidered greaves complete the costume.

The newspapers, advertisements, public regulations, and all official documents, are written in classic Greek; the language of the people is making vigorous efforts to attain to its pristine purity, and nothing can exceed the desire of the people of all ages for education.

When the Roman empire was transferred to Byzantium, the emigrants strove to dignify their new localities with old names and associations. Thus the metropolitan province was called Romelia, the language Romaic, and the trifling undulations of the city the Seven Hills. The Greece that is now re-appearing goes at once to the fountain head of history, and seeks to unite herself to her glorious youth. When I first found myself at Athens, this aspiration appeared to me as hopeless in its end as ridiculous in its means. The more I saw and heard, however, the less visionary appeared to be that hope; and I left Athens with the belief that the Greek Cross might yet replace the Crescent on the dome of St. Sophia's, and this before another century shall have passed away.

My last evening at Athens was come; and I repaired to the ruins of Jupiter's temple, when the magical glow of a Grecian sunset was bathing immortal hills in a violet or purple light, that slowly and imperceptibly alternated on height or glen. The majestic columns of the Temple towered into the ambrosial air, pale, but flushed with the deep radiance of a sky that softened down all thought of ruin from the scene, and left it only reverence. Jove's own bright star was visible through the pillared vista of his Temple, and shone upon the ancient sanctuary as if it were its Shekinah. And even thus, in the Elder World, every star was the type of some deity, who veiled his presence under that bright sign; as every mountain had its Oread, and every stream its Nymph, and every aspect of the Beautiful its angel.

We sailed at sunrise, and reached the isthmus of Corinth about noon: our course lay through the gulf. The scenery of either shore was beautiful; the mountains of Parnassus and Cithæron were in view: the islands of Ægina and Salamis were before us, and at length the Citadel of Corinth, whereon scarcely a ruin remains to tell of earth's most voluptuous city. We crossed the Isthmus by a road

of six miles in length, and, re-embarking at Lutraki, ran down the Gulf of Lepanto to Patras. The next evening we passed Missolonghi, and stood out into the Adriatic Sea.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE IONIAN ISLANDS.

Hurrah for the Spirit of England;
The bold, the true, the free,
Who stretched his hand
With a king's command
All over the circling sea!
BARRY CORNWALL.

The same delightful climate, the same serene, unclouded nights, the fresh, breezy, radiant mornings, and soft, sweet, pensive evenings of the land we had left, followed us over the Adriatic Sea.

Long after Missolonghi had passed from our view, it haunted our memories as the last scene of interest in glorious Greece. It is now become classic ground, as the death-scene of the Poet who preached, and of the Hero who fought for her sacred cause. Byron's remains have been removed to England, but Botzaris sleeps where he fell —

"Dying, as hearts like his should die,
In the hot clasp of Victory."

There are no words in poetry more pathetic than those which Byron wrote at Missolonghi, on his last birthday, breathing through their melody a spirit of utter sadness so mournfully contrasted with the bril-

liant and daring genius that inspired them. Even this last sad hope was defeated:

> "Seek out — less often sought than found —
> A soldier's grave; for thee the best;
> Then look around, and choose thy ground,
> And take thy rest."

He lingered unaccountably at Cephalonia, when he might have turned the scale for Marco Botzaris; and died of quackery at Missolonghi, when he should have been storming the Castle of Lepanto with his Suliotes. Nevertheless —

> "O' er the grave of Childe Harold Greek maidens shall weep;
> In his own native land his loved relics shall sleep
> With the bones of the bravest and best:
> His name shall go down to the latest of time —
> Fame tell how he fought for earth's loveliest clime,
> And Mercy shall blot out the rest."

The islands in the Adriatic are of a far fairer aspect than those of the Archipelago. Their forms are as picturesque, and invested with almost as brilliant a colouring by their glowing atmosphere. Zante is very Arcadian-looking in her hills, and her valleys are richly clothed with vineyards of the delicate, small grape, called "uvæ passolinæ" by botanists, and currants by the public. The chief town of the island is very pretty and primitive-looking, owing to the low, cottage-look of its houses: this humility is begotten of fear, for the frequent earthquakes would render a second story a sword

of Damocles, and the luxurious Zacynthians love to banquet at their ease. Within the twenty-four hours preceding our arrival there had been two shocks, which seemed to be considered quite matters of course upon the island.

Ithaca is the most Homeric spot existing, except the Plains of Troy: its identity has been at length satisfactorily proved, after centuries of suspicion. Leucadia's pale* cliff vindicates its own authenticity. When Sappho's wild heart quenched its love in the waves from whence Love's goddess rose, it appears that many forlorn maidens tried the same experiment — and with no doubt an equally successful result, for the cliff is three hundred feet high.

Cephalonia is the largest island belonging to the Septinsular republic. It contains 50,000 inhabitants, notwithstanding its mountainous and picturesque appearance. Agostoli, its capital, was scarcely visible in the faint light of a young moon; it is said to be populous and prosperous.

In the morning we passed by Parga, and about noon came to an anchor in the harbour of Corfu.

Here was a sudden and most pleasant change — from nations numbed by slavery and enervated by vice, or restless with revolutionary fever, to the calm, strong, solid power and influences of our own

* From λευκος, white; as Albion, from Albus.

glorious country. England's flag was flying on the citadel; England's martial music filled the air; and English hearts and hands welcomed us to Christendom.

Although this pretty town has been remodelled and almost rebuilt in the course of the thirty years that have elapsed since the Septinsular Republic came under the British protectorate, there still remains enough of the architecture and the habits of its ancient masters to give it interest and novelty. On some of the more ancient buildings the Lion of St. Mark still remains; while the piazzas, narrow streets, and numerous cafés, have all a Venetian character. The Italian language, too, predominates over Greek and English in the Babel of the streets, and the greater number of the shops are lettered in the same tongue.

As England is the greatest commercial country in the world, it follows that her colonies should be the most numerous and flourishing.* Yet wealth and protection are among the least of the advantages that they derive from the mother country: English character, energy, industry, and tolerance, furnish all the qualifications essential to the increase and stability of a colony. Such has been the case in

* England, her tributaries and colonies, occupy about one-sixth of the inhabited world. Queen Victoria rules over about 100,000,000 of people directly, and at least an equal number of subsidiaries.

North America and Australasia; at the Cape, also, and in the East and West Indies, as far as a British population has extended. At Corfu, however (as at Malta and Gibraltar), there is no attempt at colonization: not only is there no agricultural settlement, but there are no great commercial houses to weave the only inseparable links that unite dissimilar nations. If England were to abandon her Mediterranean possessions to-morrow, every one of her people would move to the tap of the drum, or the boatswain's whistle; empty barracks and dockyards would be the only property she would abandon. The Englishman never amalgates with a foreign people: he can master, and make himself familiar with, their sea, their soil, their produce; but in their cities he is still a stranger. The English are as much isolated among the Corfuotes at this hour as the French would be among the Fezzians; very few speak Italian, and the islanders show equal inaptitude to learn English: even at the Government House, notwithstanding the kind manner and the tact of Lord S—, I thought his Ionian guests appeared constrained and uncomfortable; while our countrymen and women appeared only inclined to cultivate the society of each other.

Nevertheless, this military colony of ours does what it considers to be its business right well and manfully: the free and independent bearing of the

natives, as they walk the streets, tell at once of even-handed justice and impartial rule; and, from the few intelligent natives with whom it was my fortune to converse, I heard no expression of complaint against England, except (as at home) on some constitutional points which they thought should be amended.*

Corfu looks eastward, across a narrow strait, upon Albania. There the Crescent spreads its inevitably disastrous influence: the magnificent mountains are the barren strongholds of outlaws or rebels; the luxuriant but neglected valleys are thinly inhabited by a people contending for their very existence against pestilence and oppression. A few miles of water divide this stricken land from the prosperous and beautiful island of Corfu — the Corcyra so fatal to Athenian greatness — the site of the Gardens of Alcinöus.

This island might seem all garden, in the Eden acceptation of the term, for nowhere do earth, ocean, and sky, form more rich and varied combinations: the soft and sunny valleys, the wild and shadowy glens, the gleaming rivers, the lofty precipices, the beetling cliffs, and bright blue sea, furnish all that Poussin and Salvator Rosa could desire, if they wished to form a joint picture to illustrate and contrast their style.

* See Note 5 in Appendix.

The roads are excellent, but steep; and, winding (without battlements) round the brow of rocky promontories, or through narrow gorges of deep valleys, they diverted the attention not a little from the scenery to the undisciplined team of four white Albanian horses that I drove.

The town is flanked by the citadel and the strong fortress of Castel Nuovo. The batteries on the little island of Vido complete a triangle with those of the two former. The citadel is built upon a rock rising so abruptly from the sea, that, during the siege, Nelson had formed the daring plan of running his ship close in shore, giving her a list to port, and boarding the batteries from the top-gallant yards, which would have just reached to the level of the lowest parapet.

Immense sums of money had been latterly expended on these fortifications, which it would take ten thousand men to garrison; yet it seems questionable whether the neglected Cerigo be not the only island of the Republic that is valuable to us; being not far from the present Indian route, affording the only good anchorage, and a most favourable position for a coal depôt.

Albania is in quarantine, so that I was obliged to take two officers of the English board of health as guardianos during my excursions there. Notwithstanding this Hygeian guard, I caught a low

fever in the marshes of Butrinto, which terminated my wanderings, and leaves me nothing farther to record.

Reader! — you have been my only fellow-traveller through many lands; wherever I have wandered you have been; whatever I have learned you have known; yet I scarcely venture to hope that you will share in the regret with which I say to you — Farewell!

HINTS

TO

TRAVELLERS IN THE EAST.

The following observations may be of use to those about to visit Egypt and Syria, as the state of affairs in these countries is hourly changing, and the latest intelligence is always of some value.

Most travellers are influenced in the time of their departure from England by other motives than those which the almanac supplies; but, though a man may not be able to choose his own time for starting, he can always select his own route, whereby he may correct the inconvenience of unsuitable seasons.

If you leave England in the spring, you should either go by Vienna and Pesth, down the Danube to Constantinople, or by long sea to Malta, and thence to Greece. Summer weather is essential to the enjoyment of travel in the northern countries: winter is very severe, and takes you by surprise.

If you leave England in the autumn, your best course will be to begin with Egypt, whereby you will avoid winter altogether, and reach Syria in the spring. The best time for ascending the Nile is November or December. By sea,

sixteen or eighteen days take you to Alexandria. A river steamer takes you thence to Cairo in twenty-four hours. A fortnight may be very profitably spent there in examining the environs, observing the curious drama of Egyptian life, and making use of the excellent library.

The first-class boats cost from £16 to £35 a month, including the pay of the ten to fourteen sailors, who find themselves in every article of food, dress, &c. If you take an Arab boat, it is far better to engage her by the job, stipulating to be allowed to remain whereever you please at a certain rate per day extra. This course avoids much delay and annoyance, caused by the devices of the Arabs to prolong the journey when taken by time.

The different expeditions up the Nile are generally — first, to Thebes, which occupies about three weeks in average weather, including your stay at the various places on your route; secondly, to the First Cataract, which occupies about five weeks; and thirdly, to the Second Cataract, which requires at least two months' absence from Cairo. From all that I have heard and seen, I believe that none but the enthusiastic antiquary will find any inducement to proceed further than this last place.

Your comfort during your stay in the East will depend mainly on your dragoman. These men offer themselves to you at Malta in swarms; but I am inclined to think that an Egyptian is preferable in his own country. It is well to engage your dragoman only on the recommendation of some European on whom you can rely. A Maltese dragoman charges a dollar a day: an Egyptian half that sum. You require two servants, exclusive of the crew; one to cook, the other to attend you on your expeditions.

On returning to Cairo from the Upper Nile, the route to Syria is either through the desert by Suez and Mount Sinai,

to Petra and Hebron; or, direct to Gozah and Jerusalem, which is shorter by three weeks. Our consul, or the Rev. Mr. Leider, is the only person to be depended upon for making arrangements with the Bedouin to conduct you through the desert. The journey as far as Hebron or Jerusalem is performed on dromedaries; thenceforward on horses. Besides the interest of this route, you avoid a fortnight's quarantine, which you would have to undergo at Beyrout, in sailing thither from an Egyptian port.

The winter climate of Egypt is perhaps the most delightful in the world, and the mode of travelling admirably adapted for invalids. Those to whom health is the chief object may sail from Southampton on the 3rd of October, and penetrate 1000 miles into Africa by the 1st of December, without greater exertion than is necessary to step on board a boat. The attention is pleasantly occupied; all the objects of interest are close to the river; and by the 1st of February the invalid may find himself on his way to England, having altogether escaped winter, and found in the course of his 6000 miles' travel such repose as is vainly to be sought for in the tranquillest Western life.

If you purpose only to visit Egypt, books are almost the only necessary you need take from England. Guns and wire cartridges for the various wild fowl; rifles and iron bullets for wild boars and crocodiles will suggest themselves to sportsman. A camèra lucida is of great use in taking a view of the complicated details of Egyptian architecture in a short time. Powder, books, and stationery are the three great essentials for the Egyptian traveller; they are scarcely to be procured after leaving Malta.

The traveller who proposes to visit Syria should in the first place endeavour to procure the Sultan's firman, which will be sent from Constantinople to meet him at Cairo, Je-

rusalem, or Beyrout. An English saddle and holsters, spurs and pistols, are indispensable. A small strong canteen is the only other English article of much importance. I am inclined to think that, with regard to dress, there is nothing like the turban of the country, a blouse of coloured camlet (not green, which sometimes provokes indignation, as the sacred colour of the Moslem), a pair of loose doeskin pantaloons, and Napoleon or Hessian boots, of tan leather (black attracts the sun, and can't be well cleaned), will make the most convenient and comfortable costume; a Syrian scarf wrapped round the waist is both comfortable and convenient. In suspicious circumstances, always keep your pistols in this belt, and let no Cockney laugh you out of carrying arms, that is to say, if you visit the interior or live at all adventurously; they are essential not only to safety, but to dignity.

The most convenient commissariat consists of maccaroni, rice, and preserved meats, which last should be taken from England in small packages. They are to be had, however, at Alexandria and Beyrout. Wine, porter, and liqueurs should be bought at Malta; the latter, particularly maraschino, are greatly prized by the Turkish governors, &c., and are the most popular present, except gunpowder. This, if good, is the most valuable present you can make, either to Oriental or to European.

A small medicine-chest is useful; but for all general purposes, some calomel, quinine, ipecacuanha, rhubarb, sticking-plaster, and a lancet are sufficient. It would be well to have a measurement of the quantities for each dose made by some medical man who has visited the East, as the effect of medicine upon the system varies considerably with the climate. The principal use of remedies is for the people among whom you travel; tem-

perance and your mode of life almost preclude illness, except the fevers of the country, from yourself; common caution will guard against these, and in most cases the severe but delightful action of a Turkish bath will remove any unpleasant sensation caused by suppressed perspiration, which is the chief, if not the only, danger of the climate.

The following articles are useful: — Levinge's apparatus for keeping off vermin. Saddle, holsters, cloak-straps, spurs. Hammer, gimlets,* nails, screws, thermometer, and compass. Fishing-rods, and strong tackle for the Nile. Gun, shot, powder-caps, wire cartridges. Sale's Koran, Arabic Grammar, Assaad-y Kayat's Vocabulary, and all sorts of books. Pencils, paper, all stationery, and lamps. Mackintosh beds are a great luxury, and are always clean. Cartridges for pistols, and wooden ramrod fixed in holsters to keep in the charge. Porter, potatoes, and Irish salt butter, from England. Sherry, from Gibraltar. Wine and liqueurs, maccaroni, and ship-biscuit; coarse check shirts, and duck trowsers, from Malta.

As to time, a traveller may take his passage to Cadiz, go by diligence to Seville, ride to Gibraltar, and take up the Egyptian steamer; pass two days at Malta, ascend to the Second Cataract, and return to England within four months.

If he adds Palestine to his tour, it will cause an addition of two months, viâ Beyrout or Jaffa; of three, viâ Mount Sinai and Petra. Asia Minor, Constantinople, and Greece, say four months more.

If the traveller leaves England in spring, and pro-

* These are very useful to screw into the tent-poles, and act as hooks, for clothes, accoutrements, &c.

ceeds viâ Greece, he will have the advantage in point of quarantine. From Greece to Constantinople, and thence to Smyrna, Rhodes, Xanthus, and Cyprus, he has no interruption. This last place has been made interesting by Sir C. Fellowes's most important discoveries: it is to be visited from Rhodes. The usual period of voyaging may be thus averaged: Southampton to Gibraltar, six days; Gibraltar to Malta, six days; Malta to Alexandria, five days; Alexandria to Beyrout, by sailing-packet, three days; Beyrout to Rhodes, three days; Rhodes to Constantinople, five days; Constantinople to Smyrna, two days; Smyrna to Athens, two days; thence to Patras, twenty-four hours; Patras to Corfu, thirty-six hours; Corfu to Malta, three days.

With respect to quarantine, it is to be remembered that all Moslem countries lie under its restrictions: the only means of avoiding it is by taking the Oriental steamers from Malta or Alexandria, when, the voyage being allowed, you have seldom more than two or three days to wait for pratique at Portsmouth. If you begin your tour by Egypt, you have a quarantine of twelve days at Beyrout; twelve more at Constantinople; twelve more at Greece. If you begin your journey at Greece, you may visit Constantinople, Smyrna, Rhodes, and Syria, without performing quarantine; and if you cross the desert from Jerusalem, you have no quarantine in Egypt. You should not be in Egypt after April, or in Syria before the end of March. In May, the Bosphorus is in its greatest beauty.

I subjoin the latest arrangements of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Packet Company: —

The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company's steamers start from the Southampton Docks for

MALTA and ALEXANDRIA, 20th of every month, at 2 P.M.

CONSTANTINOPLE, 29th of every month, at 2 P.M.

N.B. When these dates fall on Sunday, the hour of departure is 9 A.M.

These steamers call at Gibraltar, remaining there from 6 to 12 hours, and arrive at Malta in about 10 days, stay at Malta 24 hours, and arrive at Alexandria in 14 days from Southampton.

The passage from England to Constantinople is 15 days.

The rates of passage-money, including a handsome table and wines, and all expenses, have been lately reduced, and are —

	To Malta.		*Alexandria.*		*Constantinople.*
First Class	£20	....	£30	....	£30
Servants	10	....	15	....	15

Private cabins can be secured on early application. Liberal reductions made for large parties, and for passengers booking out and home.

ALEXANDRIA TO BEYROUT.

The screw steamer "Novelty" is announced to run with Her Majesty's Mails between these places, in lieu of the schooner "Emmetjée," and presents a very desirable mode of conveyance to passengers for Syria.

Travellers to the East, who are desirous of visiting on the way the interesting countries of the Peninsula, have the option of proceeding from port to port, say

VIGO, OPORTO, LISBON, CADIZ, AND GIBRALTAR, stopping at each, and re-embarking when convenient without extra-charge, joining the Company's Mediterranean steamers at Gibraltar.

The Company's Peninsular line of steamers leave Southampton on the 7th, 17th, and 27th of every month.

The days of arrival and departure every month (under ordinary circumstances) of the Company's steamers at and from the following ports, are —

MEDITERRANEAN LINE STEAMERS.

	Outwards.		Homewards (to England).	
	Arrivals.	Departures.	Arrivals.	Departures.
Gibraltar	8 25	8 25	18 1	18 1
Malta	14 31	15 1	12 26	13 27
Alexandria	19 5	21 7	......	21 7
Constantinople	20 0	19 0	......	19 0

PENINSULAR LINE STEAMERS.

	Outwards.		Homewards (to England).	
	Arrivals.	Departures.	Arrivals.	Departures.
Southampton	......	7 17 27	25 4 14	
Vigo	10 20 30	10 20 30	21 31 10	21 31 10
Oporto	11 12 13	11 21 31	20 30 9	20 30 9
Lisbon	12 22 1	13 23 2	18 28 7	19 29 8
Cadiz	14 24 3	15 25 4	17 27 6	17 27 6
Gibraltar	15 25 4	16 26 5	......	16 26 5

There is also a means of getting to Egypt in less time, viâ Marseilles. French steamers sail from that port on the 4th of every month at 5 P. M. They are expected to reach Alexandria in seven days; it takes from seven to nine days to reach Marseilles from London. For my own part, I very much prefer the long sea voyage; and I think that most people who have experienced the difference between English and French steamers also will prefer two or three day's additional sailing in the former.

With respect to money, Messrs. Herries and Farquhar's or Coutts's circular notes are best: get them cashed by *merchants* if you can, not by *bankers*, especially at Malta and Alexandria; the latter will give you 4 or 5 per cent. less than the former. About £50 a month cover all the expenses that the traveller (once landed and outfitted), unless very luxurious, can require in the East; for two or more travelling together, I should think the expense was little more than half.

It is well to make your dragoman your purse-bearer: make him strictly accountable to you, but never pay with your own hands. Insist on the most profound respect; preserve your temper and nonchalance as your best title to influence and security. Never join in a row if you can help it: let your people fight it out: if you must act, do so firmly, boldly, and fearlessly of consequences; there *are* no consequences that can concern a right-minded Frank. It is too frequently the habit among our countrymen to dress ludicrously or meanly. This is a great mistake, and militates much against the wearer: dress is naturally looked upon as a test of the stranger's quality, and he cannot be surprised if he is treated accordingly.

The English traveller should always remember that he has the responsibility of being considered by the Orientals

as a representative of his country; and that, according to his liberality, courage, and temper, impressions are formed of the nation he belongs to, from which the East is now expecting great things. The people of the West are known to the people of Egypt and Syria only as *Frangee*, or Franks, and *Ingeleez*, or English; I think I may venture to say that they make a wide difference in favour of the latter, which it behoves every British traveller to maintain.

APPENDIX.

Note I.

ON THE NATURAL HISTORY OF EGYPT—RAILWAYS AND CANALS.

The Valley of the Nile, which constitutes Egypt, was beyond doubt once an arm of the Mediterranean, and corresponded to that of the Red Sea. In those days, the barrier of granite, which now lies strewn in fragments round Assouan, was unbroken; and, by means of such embankment of the river and its inundations, Nubia enjoyed that fertility which their disruption transferred to Egypt. When the vast volume of water, accumulated above Philœ, poured down upon the present Valley of the Nile, it must have carried with it *débris*, and soil, and slime enough to fill up the gulf for many a mile. This deposit continued to increase until it drove back the sea to the site of the Delta, and, finally, almost within the memory of history, to its present shores The same process has been continued ever since with such regularity, that a chronological calculation has been made of its deposits at the base of the monuments, which harmonises singularly with our received dates. From Assouan, a chain of hills continues on either side to Cairo, almost uninterrupedly — a distance of about six hundred miles, passing from the granite of Syene into an argillaceous

sandstone, alternating with carbonate of lime, and finally becoming altogether calcareous. Chrysoberl, chalcedony, and jasper, are found among the pebbles of the Upper Nile; and iron, sulphur, nitre, and natron, are occasionally met with here; mines of emerald formerly, and now quarries of alabaster also exist here.

The soil of Egypt is Nile slime, of which I subjoin an analysis, made by a friend of mine,* who has twice visited the country.

Silesia	70	0
Alumine	8	0
Lime	6	0
Potash	2	0
Soda	2	0
Magnesia	2	0
Sulphate of lime	1	0
Phosphate of lime	2	0
Peroxide of iron	5	0
— of magnesia	0	50
Water	2	0
	100	50

The Flora has less variety than that of most countries. Very few plants are indigenous, and these are mostly of a pale, delicate appearance, that well becomes their home — the desert; but would appear to great disadvantage among the well-fed plants of Europe.

The native trees are the palms, the sycamore (which is called "the incorruptible," and of which mummy cases were

* Dr. Noyes, of Moorgate Street, of whose skill and knowledge of the climate I can speak from grateful experience. I should be inclined to recommend delicate travellers to have his advice before visiting the East, where he has travelled extensively.

made) — the gum-acacia, the white and black poplar, the cypress, the olive, willow, myrtle, and tamarisk. The plantain, oak, and beech, have been partially introduced, and the fruit-trees of every climate seem to prosper here, with the exception of the pine-apple and cherry, which do not thrive. If there be any fruits more especially Egyptian, they are the melon, cucumber, and other watery plants, which abound in perfection throughout the country.

The Valley of the Nile has been, in all times, remarkable for its produce of wheat, with which, under its Roman tyrants, it was obliged to supply the *canaille* of the imperial city. I am told it is of an inferior quality; but it makes excellent bread, white, light, and well-tasted. Like its cultivators, it was always bearded, and looks like barley: its increase has been estimated at from fifty to one hundred fold; but now, they say, it rarely produces more than twenty or thirty fold, except in very favourable localities. Barley is principally cultivated as food for horses; and, being satisfied with a sandy soil, although it requires much moisture, they contrive to get ten or twelve fold increase on the seed.

Dourah, or Indian corn, is very extensively cultivated, as it does not require irrigation, though Nature only knows how it fills its gigantic stalks with sap in the arid soils over which it waves its seas of verdure. Maize, millet, and rice, are also cultivated; the latter is denied antiquity in Egypt, as it does not appear in the monuments. It was probably brought from India, and is only cultivated in the lowlands of the Delta, and latterly in the swamps of Sennaar. The sugar-cane thrives well; but as yet it is not cultivated in sufficient quantities, or quality, to supply Egypt. Beans, pease, lentils, lupines, and onions, and all kitchen herbs and vegetables, grow almost wild.

With respect to the Animal Kingdom, I have already spoken of the human species, which appears to be rapidly diminishing under the enlightened tyranny of Mehemet Ali, having shrunk one-fifth within the last ten years. The other animals seem to have followed Egypt, when it went a-pleasuring on the Nile from the interior; at least, there are no animals found in Egypt that do not also exist in Nubia and Abyssinia.

The horse appears to advantage in this country, where a good practical mixture of races has taken place between those of Dongola of Arabia, and even of Europe. The Egyptian horse is taller than the generality of Arabians; his eye full of fire and intelligence; his head well set on; his forehand rather straight for our taste, but fine at the withers; his quarters are well-turned; his barrel good; his legs, clean; his pasterns, long; and, altogether, he is the most *serviceable*-looking horse I have seen in the East. He is found on all the tombs and sculptures, as well as in the stables.

The camel is considered an alien, because his antiquity is not blazoned on the monuments; but he is mentioned in Genesis. He is, whether as dromedary or camel, the most useful animal in the East; the former is, in fact, the thoroughbred camel; he is called *Hadjim* in Arabic, from being the pilgrim's (Hadj) bearer. He is trained for the saddle, and will travel from nine to twelve miles an hour for ten hours together, or for a month at a slower pace. The camel, in a country where wheel conveyances are unknown, acts the double part of a dray and a dray-horse; he will carry half a ton on his back for short distances, or eight hundred weight on a journey. Every one has heard of the epithet "ship of the desert," as applied to these creatures; but the ex-

pression is a paraphrase of the original term applied to ships by the Arabs, who called *them* "camels of the sea." This appears a most natural figure of speech to those who have watched a fleet of these animals towering over the undulations of the wide desert.

The buffalo is also an alien, according to the sculptures and monumental paintings; but he is a very useful animal, for all that; they supply the country with water,* and the people with milk.

Though the buffalo is not found among the monumental paintings, the common bull figures there frequently. At Hermonthis, in particular, there is the very *ideal* of this animal, as an English breeder would imagine him.

Sheep and goats abound in Egypt with little variety. Dogs live in a state of nature, are generally harmless, and, what is remarkable, considering their vast numbers, and the heat of the climate, they never go mad. Cats were worshipped by the ancient Egyptians, and so esteemed by Mahomet, that his favourite having gone to sleep on a corner of his robe, he cut it off when obliged to rise, rather than disturb her. This fact or fiction secures her great popularity among the Moslems; and there is even at Cairo, as I have observed, a sort of almshouse for decayed cats.

The wolf, fox, jackall, and hyæna, come sometimes under the sportsman's aim; and the wild boar is found in great numbers in the Delta.

The hippopotamus is scarcely ever seen in these days, below the Second Cataract, though there is a report of one of the species appearing near Damietta, in 1836; and there was one seen last year near the Wady Halfa.

* By their exertions in the sakeeyeh.

The giraffe is almost as rare, but sometimes seen in very lonely places: the gazelle is found everywhere on the border of the desert, and in the markets of Cairo.

The ichneumon, or Pharaoh's rat, was adored by the ancient Egyptians, on account of its destroying the crocodile in his adult state, as they asserted, by jumping down his throat when he yawned, and eating its way out from his stomach; but particularly for its propensity for sucking the eggs of this animal. These creatures are very numerous, and are often domesticated like cats, to destroy rats and mice. Lynxes, foumarts, and jerboas, also abound.

As to birds — fowls, turkeys, geese, and very few ducks, are found in the poultry-yards; wild ducks in clouds, wild geese, pelicans, vultures, falcons, hawks, eagles, buzzards, and all the night-birds down to bats, abound in incredible multitudes. The birds most peculiar to English eyes are the ibis and the Nile goose, the latter perhaps the most richly-plumaged bird in creation. The real ibis is only to be found (if there) at Lake Menzaleh, where it makes its nest among the stalks of the only true papyrus that is known here. There is something singular in these two surviving specimens of antique animal and vegetable races being found limited to the same locality. The common ibis is snow-white, and of a very graceful form, resembling a very well-made stork in miniature. It hovers in flocks over the corn-fields, and, contrasted with the rich green, its hue is only less beautiful than when seen gliding gracefully and slowly on its wide wings among the dark forests of the palm.

As to insects, imagine everything disgusting, and horrid, and monstrous, that can crawl, creep, buzz, bite, or sting; imagine them in every place where they are

most nauseous, unwelcome, and you will form some idea of the entomology of Egypt.

Of reptiles, the most respectable is the crocodile; the most classical, the cerastes, or horned asp, which baffled Cæsar; of the former, I have before spoken; the latter is avoided even by the serpent-charmer, on account of its deadly bite. Other serpents of various species abound, and we had several on board our boat; these, having had their fangs torn out, were quite harmless. There are two species of tortoise, abundance of scorpions, bull-frogs, whose nightly croakings amount to bellowing; and, lastly, the only apparently useful reptile that is known, the monitor lizard, which utters shrill cries whenever a crocodile approaches.

As to fish, I caught some hundreds, and never caught two of the same species. Their names in Arabic would tend little to enlighten the most scientific reader, and of their habits I am ignorant. I am told that salmon of immense size and delicate flavour are taken in the Nile, and that perch abound; but I never saw fish that could be identified in English.

Canals are the very life of agricultural Egypt, and require all the power and vigilance of the government to keep them in repair. It is evident that, among this indolent, narrow-minded people, who never look to second causes, that the inhabitant at the entrance of a canal would never keep it in order for the sake of those at a distance, so that government is obliged to take their management entirely into its own hands.

The principal canal in Egypt is called after Joseph, though by most geographers supposed to be the work of the Nile itself. It commences near Mellawi, and runs

through the Said to the Fayoum, where it exhausts itself into many branches.

The next canal in importance is that of Moeys, which extends from near Cairo to Lake Menzaleh, a distance of 120 miles, and is navigable all the way. The Mahmoudieh canal has already been described; besides which, there are half-a-dozen others, very important, no doubt, to the Egyptians, but little interesting to the general reader.

The effect of these canals is immensely increased by banks, or dams, that regulate the supply of water into the lower districts, as well as by large reservoirs, that retain the waters of the inundation, and economize its outlay.

The works of this nature, carried into effect by Mehemet Ali, are incredible; they extend over a space of 104,356,667 cubit metres. M. Linant, the Pasha's able and indefatigable chief engineer, has proposed a plan for embankments to cross the Nile, near the junction of the Damietta and Rosetta branches, which would produce amazing results, not only for the Delta, but for the lands on either side the river as far as Cairo. Its importance may be estimated by the calculation that it would save the employment of 25,000 sakeeyehs, involving the labour of 25,000 men and 50,000 oxen.* These canals are exclusively interesting to Egypt. I now turn to those that interest the whole commercial and travelling world.

The formation of a canal from Suez to the Mediterranean is first in importance. It would shorten the passage

* Any person curious in these matters may consult "*Histoire sommaire de l'Égypte sous Méhémet Ali*," par M. Mengin; the "*Sémaphore d'Orient;*" and Clot Bey's inestimable "*Aperçu général sur l'Égypte.*"

to India from the Levant, by 8,000 miles; that from London by 5,500 miles; that from New York by 3,000, to say nothing of

> "Many a day and many a dreadful night
> Incessant labouring round the stormy Cape."

Sesostris attempted to unite the Red Sea with the Nile; and Nechos, says Herodotus, attempted to carry out his views with the cost of 100,000 lives in the enterprise. Fortunately for the population of Egypt, an oracle forbade him to advance the undertaking, saying that it would "open Egypt to the invasion of strangers." Probably the same oracle, issuing from his own profound brains, may have operated on the mind of Mehemet Ali, who certainly has hitherto not displayed his usual energies in emulating the useful labours of his predecessors.

It would seem that this canal was at length completed, and not only conveyed shipping from the Nile to the Arabian Gulf, but, by irrigation, converted the desert into fruitful fields, on which rose (and fell), with its fructifying waters, the cities of Heroöpolis, Phlagriopolis, and Serapeum, near Arsinoë. Trajan and Amru re-opened this canal at intervals of about 500 years; but now it has vanished, except a small portion reaching into Cairo, called the Kalish. If this canal once existed, there is no reason that another, infinitely more important, might not be created and maintained across the same deserts.

The level of the Red Sea is thirty feet higher than that of the Mediterranean, and fifteen feet higher than the lowest period of the Nile at Cairo, but five feet *lower* than the Nile at its highest period. By means of the latter fact, turned to good account, the desert could be irrigated by fresh water during the very season in which

that process is necessary. A railway from Cairo to Suez is more popular, and perhaps more feasible. It is asserted that the cost would little exceed that incurred for rails and sleepers; as the level is already obtained by the banks that have been erected, and also those of the ancient canal.

The desert, between Keneh and Cosseir, affords the shortest interval between the Nile and the Red Sea; it is only seventy miles in length, aud offers but slight undulations of ground. Should the atmospheric railways come into use here, they would obviate every difficulty of level, and the houses of the stationary engines might constitute a useful chain of forts, whose guns could command the whole range of the journey. The water is deep, and the anchorage good, moreover, at Cosseir; and the most difficult and dangerous part of the navigation of the Red Sea would be thus avoided, and exchanged for the safe and tranquil navigation of the Nile.

Note II.

AGRICULTURE, MANUFACTORIES, COMMERCE, ETC. OF EGYPT.

The Egyptian considers himself as fortunate indeed if allowed to devote his industry to the light labours that the land requires. He turns up the easy soil with a wooden plough of the simplest construction, unaltered in its pattern from those we find upon the tombs of three thousand years ago: when the seed is sown, a trunk of a palm-tree, drawn by two oxen, serves all the purposes of harrowing and rolling. When the corn is cut, the sheafs are collected in a heap on some hard spot of ground, and then strewn in a circle, over which buffaloes draw a light sledge, and thus thresh out the grain.

The inundation of the Nile affords a universal, and the only manuring of the lands of Egypt. When the waters retire about the month of November, the seed is sown, and harvest appears in March. Thus, new wheat and barley can be offered in the English markets in the first week of April.

Until 1821, the cotton plant was only found as an ornament in some gardens of Cairo. It is now, after wheat, the most important production of the valley of the Nile. Its culture, adopted by the Pasha at the recommendation of M. Jamel, a Frenchman, succeeded beyond expectation. It is planted in March, and gathered in November or December: it requires a good soil, and renewal of seed every third year. Indigo is also a recent introduction,

and produces considerable revenue to the Pasha, particularly that which is grown in Nubia. Rice is kept in water, and afterwards under damp straw, until it begins to germinate; then planted in moist land. It is sown in November, and threshed at the same time, and in the same primitive manner as the wheat. The more fruitful soil in Egypt produces three crops in the year; once by inundation, and two by irrigation. The last I have already described as very severe labour, and employing 150,000 men, with 50,000 oxen, at the shadoofs and water-wheels.

The Pasha has established a number of factories, in which cotton, linen, woollen, silk, and other stuffs, are produced, besides iron foundries, and manufactories of arms. There are fifteen cotton factories, containing 1459 spinning-jennies. That called "Malta," at Boulac, is well worth a visit, and, to a superficial observer, appears as well conducted as any in England. The wool employed in the cloth factories is native, except a small quantity imported from Tunis.

The manufactures of Egypt are altogether monopolized by the Pasha, and only maintain their existence by his fiat. Nothwithstanding the low prices of the raw material, and the small expense of human labour, this extensive speculator can be undersold by Europeans in every branch of his various manufactures. Besides this, the articles are all inferior in quality to those of Europe. The climate appears to take part with the inhabitants against manufactures; the heat of the weather is injurious to the material, and the fine sand that pervades every breeze of wind is very destructive to the machinery. Moreover, the cultivable soil of Egypt, which the most inveterate political economist will allow should first

be attended to, requires more labourers than the present population can afford; and thus the country suffers as much from Mehemet Ali's passion for manufactures as from war.

All these considerations, together with Ibrahim Pasha's preference for agriculture, only give to the factories a life-lease in Egypt; and before many years pass away, we shall probably see a new and extensive market opened to England, by the return of the unwilling mechanics to the agricultural labours from which they have been torn by their tyrant. I have not been able to learn the number of persons engaged in manufactures in Egypt, but it must be very considerable, owing to the number and variety of the latter: while their novelty makes them felt as still severer hardship by the poor men and children who are doomed to the tending of them.

Alexandria must, probably, sooner or later, become the most important commercial port in the world; not only from its central situation, its admirable harbour, and its being the point of confluence of three quarters of the globe, but as the port of all India and southern Asia, whose resources are only now beginning to be developed: to these wide regions China has now been added by England's rapid and momentous victories over barbarian power and prejudice. Until lately, India was four or five months distant from England. Steam has now caused oceans to shrink into mere channels, and these channels are bridged over by our steamers. From London to Alexandria is England, from Suez to Chusan is England still, and Egypt presents a mere bank of eighty or ninety miles in breadth. This will soon be spanned by a rail-

way which English iron must supply, and which English steel must guard.

The present commerce of Egypt consists principally of wheat, cotton, rice, indigo, and opium, as exports: of cloth and linen, timber for building, iron, cutlery, paper, glass, oil, and wine, as imports. The value of the importations in 1842, was about £ 2,679,000, that of the exports about £ 2,190,000; of these the imports from England amounted to about £ 600,640; while her exports thither only reached about £ 216,000. The exports and imports of Turkey nearly balance each other, as do those of Austria. *

The whole annual commerce of Egypt, by way of the Red Sea, and caravans, is valued at about £ 400,000. Every year a caravan comes from Abyssinia with a number of black slaves, gold-dust, gum, ivory, ostrich feathers, &c.; another caravan from Morocco, with pilgrims for Mecca, comes through Algiers, Tripoli, and Tunis, across the desert, to Alexandria. There are also caravans arriving occasionally from Damascus, with silks, dried fruit, and oil. In 1822, there were only sixteen mercantile houses in Alexandria, there are now forty-four; of these thirteen are French, nine are Austrian, and only seven are English. There is a tribunal of Commerce established by the Pasha, by which all mercantile disputes and differences are heard and adjudged.

In 1814, suddenly appeared that astonishing decree, by which the Pasha announced to the inhabitants of Egypt that the whole country belonged to him, and that all the dwellers therein were but labourers on his great

* A merchant at Alexandria told me he could ship wheat at Alexandria, at 12 s. per quarter, and beans at the same price, yet that neither paid in the English market, except under peculiar circumstances.

farm, or at best but tenants at his will. Mehemet Ali made a pretext to visit Arabia, while this decree was being carried into effect by his minister. The men bowed tamely to his decree, but the women rose tumultuously, and excited some leading sheikhs to make a demonstration of resistance. One of the latter was arrested and executed on some pretence foreign to the occasion; the women were allowed to talk out their indignation, and Egypt has been ever since the unquestioned private property of the Pasha. Soon afterwards, he appropriated all the revenues belonging to pious institutions, and took them under his own protection. This last measure created more dissatisfaction than the former one, as it rendered many desperate. Previous to this appropriation, 6000 persons received daily alms from the mosque of El Azhar alone, and 2000 slept within its walls.

It is true that Mehemet Ali had a precedent for thus taking possession of all the land in Egypt in the case of Joseph's Pharaoh, Osirtesen the First, in the year 1706 B. C.; but, in the latter case, the Egyptians received a consideration for the loss of their possessions, and Pharaoh only virtually possessed himself of quit-rents, amounting to one-fifth of the value of the agricultural produce. From Mehemet Ali the Egyptians received nothing in lieu of their possessions, except a somewhat better administration of public affairs and some better irrigation for the lands. In return for this, the Pasha claims four-fifths of the produce of the land.

Note III.

THE MOUNTAIN TRIBES.

The people of the Lebanon have been in all times most rebellious to foreign powers, most loyal to their own.

Divided and dismembered as they are, there is the material of a great nation among these various tribes: they require only peace and union to make them powerful — only power to make them free. Want of union, the sundering of the fabled faggot, is their chief cause of weakness; to concentrate the energies and unite the interests of the several tribes, would require a powerful and enlightened intellect, and such has never appeared among them. Two of their Emirs,* Fakreddin, and the Emir Beschir, wanted but honesty and singleness of purpose to enable them to convert the populace of a thousand villages into a people; the former ruled from Tripoli to Mount Carmel, the latter was the sovereign, or at least the universally acknowledged source of rank and power all over the Lebanon.

Fakreddin, however, went to Europe to seek for assistance against his Turkish oppressors; he took advantage of a theory that had just then become popular, that the romantic history of the Druses had begun with the Count de Dreux, at the time of the Crusades. This claim on Christian sympathy, together with the rank, eloquence, and majestic appearance of the claimant, procured him immediate popularity in Italy, but the Chieftain of the

* Pronounced "Ameer."

Mountains soon sank into the voluptuary, and forgot the cause he had come to plead in Capuan luxury. When, at length, he did return to the mountain, all his energies and resources were dissipated in selfish schemes of policy, and building fantastic palaces. His family, all of whom were Druses, became extinct about one hundred and fifty years ago.

On the death of the last of his line, the aristocracy of the mountain elected an Emir of Hasbeia as chief governor, and this dignity, under the title of "Hakeem el Djebal," has since lineally descended in the Shehāb family from father to son. This illustrious family came originally from Shabha, in the Haourân; and are lineally descended from the Standard-bearer of the Prophet Mahomet. I could not learn from any of the Emirs the date of their arrival in Syria; they spoke of it vaguely as "several hundred yěars ago." It would seem that they came as conquerors, since they obtained large possessions with feudal privileges in the country about Mount Hermon, and the sources of the Jordan. Their chief castles are named Hasbeya and Rascheia, both of which I have described.

The Emir Beschir is now the first man among the tribes, nominally, though a prisoner; to him belong the beautiful palace of Beteddeen, and the sovereignty of the Lebanon. He was able, it is said, to summon 15,000 armed men to his standard at three hours' notice.

When the Egyptian forces invaded Syria in the late war between Mehemet Ali and the Porte, the Emir remained neutral for some time, neglecting the orders of the Sultan to attack Ishmael Pasha, and at the same time abstaining from any communication with the latter until he had possessed himself of Acre, and his cause appeared to be trium-

phant. Then, in an evil hour, he invited him to his palace, and professed himself his faithful ally.

Ishmael accepted the invitation, and so arranged his plans, that on the evening of his arrival at Beteddeen, 15,000 Egyptian troops encamped on the hills around. The Pasha then explained to the Emir that he wished the mountaineers to give up their arms, and the poor Chieftains were obliged to comply. The Egyptian had already obtained by spies and bribery a return of all the arms on the Lebanon; and his troops, surrounding each village, now required the complement assigned, whether truly or otherwise. The Maronite priests, I know not why, exhorted their people to comply: the Druses resisted. This has already changed the character of these sects; the disarmed Maronites have become timid and unwarlike, the Druses proportionably bolder, and more free.

The Egyptians remained long enough in Syria to make a most favourable reform, and from this fact may be estimated the state to which the Turks had reduced it. The name of Mehemet Ali became a terror to the Bedouin in his desert, and to the Druse upon the mountain. Commerce returned to the seaports, security was bestowed on the public ways, mines were worked, crushing imposts abated. I am no panegyrist of Mehemet Ali's, but I think it only just to his character to mention these circumstances, which are universally admitted in the East.

It was only this forced disarmament of the mountain tribes, and the dreaded conscription, that turned Syria against his cause, and enabled the languid and unwholesome sway of the Porte once more to establish itself in this country. When England dispossessed Mehemet Ali of Syria, in order to restore it to the Turks, the aged Emir Beschir was brought to account for his unprofitable inti-

macy with the Egyptians. He and his three sons were inveigled to Constantinople, where they have ever since remained under strict surveillance, with the exception of the youngest, who was permitted to reside in poverty at Beteddeen.

The chief authority is now possessed by the Emir Sadadin of Hasbeia; the Emir Afendy of Rascheia is next in consideration. These families are both Moslem, though the Emir Beschir and his ancestry were Christian, which they became, in order to conciliate the then powerful sect of the Maronites. This people derive their origin from Maron, a saint of the fifth century; persecuted as heretics by the Greek empire, they have long survived their oppressors, and preserved their own peculiar faith with little alteration up to this hour. It is true, they have occasionally acknowledged obedience to the See of Rome; but the Legate is subordinate in power to the Patriarch, and their priests marry and celebrate mass in the Syriac instead of Latin. The Pope entered into this compromise with them, they refusing to learn Latin, but deferring so far to the Roman pleasure as to consent to use the old Syriac language in their masses, as equally unintelligible to their hearers as the Latin. The Patriarch bears himself as despotically in his monastery of Canobin, near Tripoli, as if he still held his ancient rule at Antioch. Nine bishops and one hundred and fifty priests minister to about 150,000 souls. They have numerous monasteries, and are exceedingly ignorant and poor, but very tolerant. The chief Maronite districts are the Kesrouan, Djebail, and Katch Bukfaijet.

The Metoualis, or Moslem sectaries who follow Ali in preference to Osmar, are the wildest and least civilized, but also the fewest in number of the tribes. They do not

amount to more than 20,000, and inhabit Akaleem, Sidon, Baalbec, and the mountains near Djebail.

The Druses are the most characteristic people, and their worship is wrapped in mystery. To them, the form of religion they outwardly profess appears a matter of indifference. If thrown among Moslems, they follow their usages; if among Christians, they adopt theirs. The founder of their faith was a lunatic Caliph of Cairo, called the "Hakeem," who announced himself as the long-promised Messiah of all faiths. He, they say, was taken up into heaven; but his faithful follower, Hamza, was graciously left on earth to enlighten it with his doctrines. Banished from Egypt, he found a refuge among the mountains of Lebanon, where his creed spread rapidly. On his death, Moktana, his disciple, carried on the Prophet business, and reduced it into order. He announced seven commandments, inculcating Veracity, Charity, Renunciation of Mahomet, Submission to God's Will, Confession, Fidelity to their Faith, and acknowledgment that all other religions are mere types, more or less perfect, of this, the perfect one.

They were divided into two great classes and many sects; the former consisted of the "Initiated" and the "Novices;" * the latter, amongst others, were divided into "Nosairi" and "Quadrimousi." The Nosairi, or Ansairies, performed daily the most obscene worship; the Yeseedies are supposed to adore a golden calf, as the Persians do Ahriman, the Origin of the Evil; this calf symbolizes Eblis, the spirit at issue with that of the Hakeem.** The principal Druse districts in the Lebanon are called "Thoof," "Arkoob," "Shebhâ," "Garb," and "Mattu."

* Called the *Fawil*, or "interior;" and the *Teizil*, or "external."

** And the same that the Israelites worshipped in the wilderness.

They are also found in the Haourân, Antilebanon, and Jebel el Alah, near Aleppo. Their whole number may amount to 120,000.

However differing in creed, these various tribes are all under the same form of government; a sort of feudal aristocracy, consisting of Emirs, Mokaddems, and Sheikhs. These are each independent in his own district. The chief Emir, or "Hakeem el Wâpt," bestows all rank, and entitles a man and all his descendents to be Sheikhs, or even Emirs, by calling him brother. All the Emirs, whether Druse, Metouali, or Maronite, acknowledged the Emir Beschir as supreme, and kissed his hands. In case, however, of making war, the Emir cannot summon the dependents of the inferior Emirs to accompany him to battle; but must apply to the respective Sheikhs, or Mokaddems, who seldom refuse to furnish their contingent.

After the Shehāb family come the Bêt Belâmâ, whose ancestor was only a Mokaddem; but, having acquired a great reputation, he called himself Emir, and was confirmed in that title by the Chief of the Emirs. Next is the Resstan family, who are all Druses.

The Chief Emir alone had the power of life and death, which is now monopolized by the Porte: the inferior Princes and Sheikhs frequently, however, take the law into their own hands, and few Druses would be found base enough to appeal from them to a Turkish Pasha, even to save his life.

The Emirs are subordinate at present to the Pasha of Damascus, who nominally has the power (which he dare not test) to remove them.

The Metoualis, and the few orthodox Moslems in the Lebanon, are devoid of conviction of the divine right of the

Sultan, and have no religious scruple in carrying arms against the "Vicegerent of the Prophet."

All the chiefs possess property and tenants: but there are many independent freeholders who, together with the tenants, pay all the taxes; the nobility and clergy being exempt. I have spoken of the industry of the people in a former chapter; I must also observe upon their fine, martial bearing, their freedom from many of the vices of the Plains, their tolerance, intelligence, and hospitality.

Some years ago, the Druses sent a deputation to our Consul-General, offering to place themselves under the protection of Great Britain, to receive and build houses for our missionaries, and to send all their children to the Christian schools. The proposition was coldly received by Lord Ponsonby, treated with indifference by Lord Melbourne, and the chiefs returned to their mountains, affronted and disheartened.

The people of the Lebanon seem to have no idea of union, or any thoughts of Syria as a whole: their patriotism seems confined to each village or district.

I regretted very much not being able to devote more time to the examination of this most magnificent country, and its interesting people. I would beg to direct the attention of travellers to the following subjects:

1. To geographers, the Lebanon is almost a "terra incognita;" every information as to distances and elevations is of great importance. The source of the river Liettani is unknown, yet must be somewhere in the plain of Baalbec, or on the hills towards the Cedars.

2. There are two MS. histories of the Shehāb families existing, which would throw light upon the obscure history of this people. The Emirs Sadadeen and Afendy told me

they knew of these books, but did not know in whose possession they now were.

3. There are two printing-presses on the Mountain; one at Kisbeia, near Eden; the others at Mar Hanna el Shiveir, one day's journey from Beyrout. No copy from the former has ever reached Europe.

4. There are some curious ruins of a Greek temple between Baalbec and Zahle; and the ruins of a Roman city are to be found near Fakra, on the western declivity of Djebel Sunnin. Neither of these have ever been explored, that I am aware of, by any person able to form an opinion as to their merits.

The traveller will also find a visit to Antoura and the Natural Bridge repay his labour well. They are only one easy day's journey from Beyrout.

These are all points on which I was unable to satisfy myself, owing to my limited time. *

* I am indebted for the principal part of this information to the Rev. Dr. Kerns (missionary at Aleppo), M. Schultze, H. P M.'s Consul at Jerusalem, Colonel Churchill, and Assaad Yacoob y Kayat.

Note IV.

ON THE CRESCENT AND THE CROSS AS SYMBOLS.

(Vol. II Page 189.)

Le Père Lafitau, in his "Manners of the American Savages," shows, from various authorities, that THE CROSS was received as an object of worship amongst them before the discovery of that Continent by the Europeans, and was considered a religious symbol by the ancient world. It is seen in the hands of Horus Apollo, on the necks of the god Apis, of Jupiter Ammon, in the Thyrsis of Bacchus, on the bosom of vestal virgins, and on the sacred vases in which libations were offered to the gods; and its traces may be found in the oldest words of Phœnician and Chinese History.

The student may also consult *Lipsius de Cruce*, lib. i. cap. 8; *Gretser de Cruce*, lib. i. cap. 51; *Pignotius in expos. mensæ Isiacæ; Kircher in Ædipo.;* and *Obelisc. Pamphil.*

THE CRESCENT was the symbol of the city of Byzantium, and was adopted by the Turks. This device is of very ancient origin, as appears from several medals, and took its rise from an event thus related by a native of Byzantium. 'Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, meeting with great difficulties in carrying on the siege of this city, set the workmen one dark night to undermine the

walls. Luckily for the besieged, a young moon suddenly appearing, discovered the design, which accordingly miscarried; in acknowledgment whereof the Byzantines erected a statue to Diana, and the Crescent became the symbol of their state.' — A. P.

NOTE V.

GOVERNMENT OF CORFU.

(Vol. II Page 234.)

When England accepted the protectorate of the Ionian Republic, assigned to her in 1815, she undertook to grant or to continue to them a free constitution. This consists of a House of Assembly, containing forty members, returned by the Seven Islands in a proportion relative to their population. From this House of Assembly, a senate, or council, composed of six members, is selected by the Lord High Commissioner. These are, in fact, the ministry of the Republic, each presiding over a particular department, and receiving a salary of £ 800 per annum, while the President of the Council has an income of £ 1300. As the members of this council (whatever island they may belong to) are obliged constantly to reside at Corfu during their administration, this allowance is necessary to induce them to accept office. The House of Assembly only sits for three months in every second year; the power of convening or proroguing is vested in the Lord High Commissioner; that of dissolution, in the Crown alone.

This appears a sufficiently free form of government; and the only complaints I heard against it were, that the system of representation was corrupt; that there was no freedom of the press; and that Corfu was taxed to pay England.

With respect to the former, a list of the persons whom the Lord High Commissioner deems eligible for representatives is sent to each island previous to an election: the electors may choose from out that list alone; if they don't like A. they must have B. To this objection I heard it replied that the islands, if left to their own selection, would return none but deputies of the Anti-English party, which would involve the government in perpetual difficulty.

With respect to the Freedom of the Press, however invaluable that liberty may be in a great country, it appears to be productive of very indifferent results in a small community, where its spirit must be mainly fed upon personalities and imaginary grievances, as is the case at Malta.

The third ground of complaint is the tax of £ 36,000 per annum claimed by England for purposes said to be unconnected with the interests of the island. It is true that this sum was formerly levied and applied to the repair of the existing fortifications and the creation of new; but it has not been levied for the last five years, and probably never will again. Moreover, the expenditure of English money in the island amounted to at least five times the amount of this tax.

I mention these accusations against the English government as proving how little reason exists for complaint. The benefits conferred upon the Republic, and upon Corfu especially, by English rule, are not so easily enumerated. Sir Thomas Maitland (familiarly known in the island as "King Tom") first reduced the island to order and security; roads were made in every direction; lazarettos built; schools established; the town and fortifications repaired; commerce encouraged; and a native police created.

The island appeared, to my superficial observation, to be prosperous and thriving, with full employment for its

people, and a fair rate of remuneration for labour. We may proudly contrast its present state with that which it exhibited under the tyranny of the Venetian "proveditori," the Russian "commandants," and — worse than all — of its own factious native authorities.

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